

METAL HAMMER HOT SHOT

THIS MONTH'S PICTURE WORTH A THOUSAND HORNS

WOLF

SAN ANTONIO, IBIZA. JUNE 7, 2010

It's summer and we are in the spiritual home of the DJ to see a week of metal at Hard Rock Hell Ibiza. Wolf and Grand Magus are sitting incongruously around the pool area, planning the next few days' entertainment. "Do you want to do pictures of us naked?" asks a member of Wolf. Playing along, I say, "Great idea!" "All next to the pool? YEAH!" they shout in unison, followed by the drummer who adds, "We better get up early and shaved!" It's 2pm the next day and four smooth-chested and shaved-legged Swedish metallers are covering their modesty with their instruments, except the drummer, who's trying, unsuccessfully, to hide his tackle behind a beer glass with at least 20 'Tracys' and 'Sharons' yelling encouragement. This was as much fun to do as it looks.

PHOTOGRAPHER:

MICK HUTSON
www.mickhutson.com



Wolf (left to right): Johannes
Axeman, Niklas Stålvind,
Richard Holmgren, Anders Modd



INTRODUCING!

NEWS ⚡ COMMENT ⚡ HEAVY FUCKING METAL

The Ozzman
cometh backeth

OZZFEST IS GO!

OZZY BRINGS OZZFEST TO THE UK WITH ALL THE FUN OF THE FAIR!

METAL HAMMER PRESENTS... OZZFEST THE MAGAZINE

A 132-page special issue magazine honouring Ozzy Osbourne and Ozzfest featuring new interviews (including an exclusive Ozzy interview), the history of Ozzy, a buyer's guide and Ozzy's greatest moments. Edited by Paul Elliott, the issue will cover the festival's 14-year history which includes acts such as Ozzy Osbourne and Black Sabbath, Slipknot, Linkin Park, Foo Fighters, Slayer, Pantera, Marilyn Manson, Judas Priest and System Of A Down as well as in-depth coverage of all acts performing on September 18: Korn, Murderdolls, Skindred and other acts to be confirmed.

The legendary touring metal fest is set to hit the UK with a one-off date at London's O2 arena on September 18, 2010. The Ozzfest headliners announced so far are Ozzy Osbourne (of course), Korn, Murderdolls and Skindred. Ozzy and Korn have just released return-to-form albums. Murderdolls are also to release a stellar album, their first release in eight years, and Welsh ragga metal army Skindred are on a stratospheric rise in the wake of their awesome *Shark Bites And Dogs Fights* and a string of amazing shows including Sonisphere, Hammerfest and our own Golden God Awards in June. In addition to the music on offer, Ozzy's camp will take over the entire O2 complex, offering up a Village Of The Damned with fairground rides, stalls and tattooists.

"It means a lot to bring Ozzfest back to the UK," says Ozzy. "This is the first time that we're bringing Ozzfest indoors. The O2 is the perfect place to hold a festival. Let it rain, let it hail, let it thunder, because we'll be rocking inside."

The 2010 event is the first UK Ozzfest in over five years and will be the first time that the O2 will feature a general admission format on the lower bowl: GA ticket holders will be able to choose between watching the show from seats, or the specially enlarged standing area. Top-level tickets will also be available, offering the usual seating. It will be UK Korn fans' first chance to hear material from the new album, *III: Remember Who You Are* performed live.

"We're extremely excited to be playing Ozzfest in Europe" grins guitarist Munky. "Ozzy is an absolute legend, mentor, and dear friend of mine, so it's

always an honour to perform on the same bill as him. We can't wait!"

Murderdolls, the supergroup featuring Wednesday 13 and Slipknot's Joey Jordison will also be playing new material, from their *Women And Children Last* album, out in August.

Skindred frontman Benji Webbe says: "It's been some time since the Ozzfest has reached these UK shores. Skindred are highly honoured and excited to be joining the legend that is Ozzy Osbourne and taking part in this monstrous event. The metal public know this one's gonna rock harder than all da res..."

Tickets will be priced at £40 in advance (subject to booking fee) and are available from 0871 230 5595, www.kililive.com and usual outlets.

Keep your eyes on www.metalhammer.co.uk for more band announcements in the coming weeks.

"We will be making rafts out of your bones" CATTLE DECAPITATION'S TRAVIS RYAN TALKS ABOUT THEIR CURRENT UK TOUR - SEE THEM NOW!

**1**

The number of times Deftones have invited Paramore singer Hayley Williams onstage to sing *Passenger*. The number of Deftones fans who've gagged in horror has yet to be recorded. We're guessing it's loads.

**76**

The number of minutes the new Iron Maiden album, *The Final Frontier*, lasts. With several tracks approaching the ten-minute mark, it's surely the most adventurous and epic album in the band's career.



Slipknot: second stage material back in 1999. How times have changed...

THE PERSISTENCE OF TIME

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE OZZFEST FESTIVAL, FEATURING A TV TALENT CONTEST, FREE TICKETS AND ALL-OUT WAR BETWEEN SHARON AND IRON MAIDEN.

1996 The two-day Ozzfest is created in Arizona and California by Ozzy Osbourne and wife Sharon in response to Ozzy being turned down for Lollapalooza.

1997 The festival is well-received and returns for a second year with Ozzy, Black Sabbath, Pantera, Marilyn Manson, Machine Head, Type O Negative and Fear Factory on the bill.

1998 Ozzfest comes to the UK's Milton Keynes Bowl and features a different lineup to the US tour, including Pantera, Slayer, Ozzy Osbourne, Black Sabbath, Foo Fighters, Pitchshifter, Fear Factory, Entombed and Human Waste Project.

1999 Ozzfest expands to a massive 28-date tour of the US, featuring Black Sabbath, Rob Zombie, Deftones, Slayer, Primus (featuring Buckethead), Godsmack and System Of A Down while the second stage includes Fear Factory, Static-X, Slipknot and others.

2000 Now at 29 dates, the two-stage tour includes many of the same bands as previous years including Ozzy, Pantera and Godsmack.

2001 After 32 dates in the US, Ozzfest comes to the UK again for a one-off date at the Milton Keynes Bowl and brings Black Sabbath, Slipknot, Tool, Papa Roach, Disturbed, Mudvayne, Black Label Society and others with it.

2002 Ozzfest arrives in Europe and sees bands from the bill – including Ozzy,

Tool, System Of A Down, Bad Religion and others – play at Rock Im Park (Germany), Braunschweig (Germany), Antwerp (Belgium), Donington (UK), Kildare (Ireland), Katowice (Poland), Prague (Czech Republic), Nijmegen (Netherlands) and Lisbon (Portugal).

2004 Ozzfest's 2004 tour is shown on MTV. Ozzy and Sharon host a show on the network entitled *Battle For Ozzfest* where they choose eight out of hundreds of bands to compete for a spot on the following year's Ozzfest.

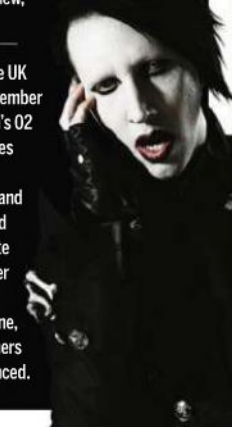
2005 The infamous Ozzfest where Iron Maiden are pelted with eggs and have their sound tampered with, apparently instigated by Sharon Osbourne in response to negative comments from the Maiden camp.

2007 The free Ozzfest. Tickets are made available through sponsor websites, the Ozzfest website and to those buying an advance copy of Ozzy Osbourne's new release, *Black Rain*.

2008 One-date Ozzfest in Pizza Hut Park Texas, with Metallica, Ozzy, Serj Tankian, Cavalera Conspiracy, Shadows Fall and others.

2009 Phew, a year off.

2010 The UK date on September 18 at London's O2 Arena features Ozzy, Korn, Murderdolls and Skindred, and an Israeli date on September 28 features Ozzy Osbourne, Korn and others to be announced.

**BUZZ**

FRESHLY CUT
PIECES OF NEWS!



The greatest music DVD ever – *Every Time I Die's Shit Happens* – is being turned into a web series. ETID will be creating a brand new weekly *Shit Happens* series of online videos, each one documenting a week of ETID shenanigans on this summer's US Warped Tour. Watch the trailer and subsequent episodes at www.metalhammer.co.uk.

Architects have announced Norma Jean and Devil Sold His Soul as support for their UK tour. The dates run from October 1-9 – see them and be amazed!

C*NT OF THE MONTH
GINGER BAKER



The wrinkly, squinty-eyed, notoriously objectionable and nearly dead Cream legend recently stated that: "People say Cream gave birth to heavy metal... if that's so we should have had an abortion!" Newsflash, donkey-face... Cream didn't give birth to heavy metal. That was Black Sabbath. Playing turgid blues songs really loud while off your chuff on heroin is not quite the same thing. Meanwhile, you're a prize cunt. Well done!



Maria recently won *Revolver* magazine's 'Hottest Chick In Metal'. We're not arguing

ON THE BRINK

LA METALLERS BRING BACK THE HEAVY AS WELL AS A CONCEPT FOR AWESOME THIRD ALBUM.

In This Moment have just released their third album, the return to heaviness that is *A Star-Crossed Wasteland*. The LA band have had a meteoric rise, not least propelled by enchanting frontwoman Maria Brink. We spoke to Maria to find out more about the new release. "Going heavier again was conscious," she explains. "I was missing it. After the first album [2007's *Beautiful Tragedy*] I felt like I'd been screaming for years. I was craving the melodic side of things so I really took a turn with [second album] *The Dream*. However, I feel as lost without the aggressive side as without the melodic, so we've mixed the two and I think we've really found our defining sound."

The band also experimented with other elements such as spoken word and, as Maria explains, a cross between screaming and singing, a sort of yelling: "It just felt really cool." And what of the concept?

"I was in a darker place this time. Losing some people I love... separation. Sometimes darker times bring out the best

art in people. Unfortunately, Me and my boyfriend [Jonathan Miller, DevilDriver bassist] broke up after three years; that played a huge part in this. We always said we were star-crossed lovers, hence the album title."

So, can we expect some giant sprawling narrative à la Coheed And Cambria or tale from the sea like Mastodon?

"I love to tell stories," she admits. "So it's kind of a concept album – not a story from beginning to end – but there's a post-apocalyptic feel where everything has died away and the few people left are searching for the new world, new beginnings. I don't like to overtly say, 'Oh I'm sad, I have a broken heart' – I'd rather tell a cool, dark story and use metaphor."

The band are currently on the Rockstar Mayhem Tour, playing alongside Korn and Rob Zombie. So what's left to achieve?

"I want to be able to buy my son a home and my mom a home... to take care of them."

Awww, she's got heart, too!

A STAR-CROSSED WASTELAND IS OUT NOW VIA CENTURY MEDIA



"We've recreated that 70s sound. It captures an era" ALICE COOPER ON *WELCOME TO MY NIGHTMARE*'S SEQUEL: *WELCOME 2 MY NIGHTMARE*.

NEW COMMENT: HEAVY FUCKING METAL!
INCOMING!

20 The number of square feet available to British metallers The Eyes Of A Traitor as they cram all their gear into a garden shed during the video for their new song, *Come To My Senses*.

17,922 The number of people who had watched Ozzy's bonkers new video, *Let Me Hear You Scream*, within about 20 minutes of it going online. If you haven't seen it yet, you know what to do.

HOLY GRAIL

THE MONTH'S MOST HALLOWED MERCH



A7X 1

Avenge Sevenfold have just released a tasty special limited edition *Nightmare Box Set*, which includes *Nightmare*, exclusive artwork t-shirt, pendant and black fingerless gloves with logo. Order this awesome package from their webstore at avengedsevenfold.shop.bravadousa.com/

Andrew WK 2

Andrew WK, the king of party music, needed some sweet merch for Warped Tour in the US, so Aggronautix created a sweetass Throbblehead for him. The figure is limited to 1,000 numbered units and stands at seven inches tall, complete with the bloody face, arm tats, watch and dirty whites.

Negura Bunget 3

The release of this handmade wooden box, limited to 555 copies, was delayed because it was near-impossible to assemble. But now it's out and includes Transylvanian earth, deluxe eight-panel digipack-CD of *Virstele Pamintului*, exclusive poster, album sticker and metal pin. All for only €40!



SONIC BOOM

EXCLUSIVE VIDEO SHOOT REPORT

THERE can be few places in Gothenburg more picturesque than Keillers Hill.

Amongst rich foliage, glacier-worn rock formations and stunning panoramic views of the city below this former suicide spot for retired Vikings is where Anglo-Swedish melodic metallers Sonic Syndicate are shooting the video to *My Own Life*, from their new LP, *We Rule The Night*.

As the shoot begins in earnest, nothing much happens, save for each member casually walking up some rocks towards a sundial, then walking down again. Fortunately director Patric Ullaeus is on hand to proffer an explanation as to just what is going on: "We wanted to make this video a mini movie. I've done a whole bunch of Sonic Syndicate videos, and in most of them the band is playing. But this is a different kind of song – almost a ballad – so we wanted to create something where the band are actually 'acting', instead of just playing."

After filming what will be the climactic scene, it's back to the comparative cool and complementary energy drinks of the studio to film bassist Karin Axelsson frolicking about in, well, very little, whilst feathers are thrown at her. It's as fun as it sounds. Again, it's a wonder how all this links together until, in a moment's respite whilst Karin adjusts herself, Patric continues to explain:

"We wanted to make the video about the different lives they're leading, and make them all intertwine. For example, in one part some of the guys are walking past a shop window, and there's a magazine with Karin on the front cover. So, then we go into that and are transported into the photoshoot – which we are shooting now!"

But each of these stories has a dark parallel (scenes of bullying and near vehicular homicide were shot the previous day). Karin's scene is one of self-loathing and isolation, and the weekend's final shoot revolves around her having to violently annihilate a mirror in a mock dressing room. This, too, is as fun as it sounds, although we're still trying to pick the feathers out of our beards!



Karin Axelsson: bird of a feather



HAMMER STEREO

WHAT'S ANNOYING CLASSIC ROCK THIS MONTH!



YOUR DEMISE
THE KIDS WE USED TO BE

"The melody of *Rise Against* with the muscle of *Hatebreed*. It's gonna blow up!"

TERRY BEZER

Web Editor



LOWER THAN ATLANTIS
FAR Q

"70% Gallows, 30% *The Clash*. 100% homegrown zeitgeist junk rock."

JAMES GILL

Editor At Large



SABBATH ASSEMBLY
RESTORED TO ONE

"Cult hymns from another age, made timeless by the velvet-voiced Jez Thoth."

JONATHAN SELZER

Reviews Editor



36 CRAZYFISTS
COLLISIONS AND CASTAWAYS

"Why aren't they huge already?! Your favourite band you haven't heard yet."

CAREN GIBSON

Deputy Editor



THUNDER
AT THE BBC 1990-1995

"A six-CD box set that makes me miss this great British rock band more every day!"

VANESSA HARDS

Production Editor



OZZY OSBOURNE
SCREAM

"Prince Of Fucking Darkness. Huge riffs. Slick solos. Rocking!"

LEWIS SOMERSCALES

Deputy Art Editor



THE SWORD
WARP RIDERS

"Handpicked by Lars to support Metallica, they shit planetoid-size riffs with ease."

JAMES ISAACS

Art Editor



IRON MAIDEN
THE FINAL FRONTIER

"Stunningly diverse and heavy as fuck. Only Maiden could have made this record."

ALEXANDER MILAS

Editor

METAL TESTED WITH THE AID OF MORTOR AUDIO

"I've always loved David Fincher's work [Fight Club/Panic Room] but I wondered what would draw him to



12 The number of rock and metal classics reinterpreted on the ukulele by the demented Lucky Uke on his new self-titled album. Songs include *Sweet Child O' Mine* and *The Number Of The Beast*.



101 The number of musicians who have already contributed to the recording of the new undoubtedly extravagant Dimmu Borgir album, *Abrahadabra*, including the 51-piece Norwegian Radio Orchestra and 38-member Schola Cantorum Choir.

BUZZ

FRESHLY CUT
PIECES OF NEWS!



⚡ Alestorm have confirmed that they will join Sabaton on a massive European adventure that kicks off in Karlstad, Sweden on September 24 and rolls on until Stockholm on November 27, 2010. Included in the schedule are six UK shows: Manchester Academy 2 October 11, Glasgow Garage 12, London Electric Ballroom 14, Wolverhampton Wulfrun Hall 15, Sheffield Corporation 16, and Brighton Concorde 2 17. Alestorm keyboardist Christopher Bowes says: "Hey there, sexy people! Alestorm is gonna be main support for Sabaton on their World War Tour. It's like, their biggest tour, ever. Tickets are already selling fast, and we reckon a lot of shows are gonna sell out, so be quick! We'll see you there!"

DEEP THROAT

Download had its biggest and most successful year yet, so who will be playing next year? Andy Copping has always tried to get Van Halen, citing money as an issue. How about Poison? Foo Fighters might be there and with Coppo's power to reunite bands maybe System Of A Down or even original Guns N' Roses...?



Reckless Love (left to right): Jalle Verne, Olli Herman, Pepe, Hessu Maxx



AUTHENTIC HOMAGE OR PATHETIC PASTICHE? CAN RECKLESS LOVE FILL THE COWBOY BOOTS LEFT BY THE 80S HAIR METAL HEROES?

If you're over 30 it won't be the emos you're bothered about, it's the hair metal revival bands. As Machine Head's Robb Flynn once told us whilst having a wee at the Golden Gods aftershow, "There's good hair metal and there's bad hair metal." It was with naive enthusiasm that we awaited the promised hair metal revival five years ago when Mötley Crüe published *The Dirt* and bands like Faster Pussycat, Tesla and LA Guns promised tours. We also hoped that hindsight might make the second generation a bit harder, faster, better, stronger. But no, we got Stead!ür, Escape The Fate and Reckless Love.

"Our aim is just to make good music that we love and the 80s style of music is very close to our hearts," explains Reckless Love drummer Hessu Maxx. Sure, we say, but is that of relevance now, over 20 years on?

"I think we have a place," he says. "There's always room for good music, and there's always room for you if you do your job well."

And while we may not be over-enamoured with their eponymous debut album on Spinefarm, they sold out their debut UK tour and were invited onto the Download bill, where, we hear, they rocked. Are we more discerning now? The Finnish band are slim and beautiful and a perfectly dressed pastiche. It's all a bit too studied.

Are we more cynical? Their songs have titles like *Badass, So Yeah!!* And *Sex*. Come on, even Pretty Boy Floyd didn't have anything quite that crass. Hessu says there's always an element of truth to their songs. They're not just words. So what's *Sex* about then?

Or are we just a bit more enlightened? 80s lyrics match the loose sex, drugs and materialism of the period. Do we not live in more enlightened times?

"Yes," admits Hessu. "Drugs aren't involved. If you do drugs there is no room for you, the competition is so fucking hard. There have to be girls or this is pointless because we certainly don't get money!"

Really, though? Really?

"No, of course not!" he laughs. "The whole point is to make music, for us and for our fans. If there happen to be beautiful ladies among them then great!"

They don't sound that reckless. Nikki Sixx died once, Ozzy snorted ants and Brett Michaels had sextapes that went out online.

"Of course our life is quite reckless," Hessu says.

"Sure a lot of us have girlfriends but you can still be reckless with your girlfriend. It doesn't mean that when you're reckless you have to fuck everything that moves."

Aerosmith were accused of ripping off the Stones, GN'R were accused of ripping

off Aerosmith and Heaven's Basement are accused of ripping off GN'R. And the thousands of people who have witnessed Reckless Love on stages across the UK don't care, which stands as testament to their quality: a band who aren't interested in innovation for the sake of it. They just want to look, sound and be like their favourite bands. Who wouldn't? And taste police criticisms aside, the Helsinki-based quartet have actually pulled it off.

"We are the most honest band from Finland," claims Hessu. "We're not trying to be anything we aren't. We're all very cheerful, we're all quite reckless and we love girls... we really do."

GETTING IT RIGHT!

SOME PROPER 80S-INSPIRED BANDS...

STEEL PANTHER

80s parody that's better than the real thing: awesome tunes with funny lyrics played by expert musicians who love to rock!

BLESSED BY A BROKEN HEART

They look ridiculous but their hair-metalcore is a perfect blend of 80s synth-infused pop rock and heavy metal breakdowns.

THE GALVATRONS

Australia's collision of Van Hagar and Mötley Crüe come with as much pomp as bite.



Satchel recalls his last threesome

tell that story" TRENT REZNOR ABOUT WORKING ON THE MOVIE ABOUT FACEBOOK, THE SOCIAL NETWORK



2,000 Dollars bail paid by the wife of Crüe singer Vince Neil when he was arrested and charged with DUI in Las Vegas recently.



1

Number of UK dates on Finntroll's forthcoming European tour. Brit fans of the troll-based folk metallers are gutted.



Volbeat: Anders Kjøhlholm, Thomas Bredahl, Michael Poulsen, Jon Larsen



In the studio with...

VOLBEAT

THRASHA-BILLY? GRINDA-BILLY? NEW ALBUM FEATURES KREATOR & NAPALM DEATH FRONTMEN!

It's rare that the UK is the last place to pick up on a band. Machine Head, Korn, Slipknot and Trivium are just a few who hit the big time in Blighty before becoming global superstars. But in the case of Volbeat, we're a little behind the rest of our European cousins, where the boys are already hot shit. Look for that to change upon the release of their stonking new album, *Beyond Hell/Above Heaven*. Taking their unique mixture of punk rock pacing, Metallica-sized guitar tones and knife-wielding, rockabilly cool to heady new heights, Volbeat are set to be one of the big success stories of 2010.

"We try to stick to the Volbeat style, but there has to be a challenge and progression on each album. This is our fourth record, so I want to see how far we can push the Volbeat style," says über-cool frontman Michael Poulsen. "This is definitely going to be the most random Volbeat record. It's true to ourselves, but we want to do many things different on each record to keep it interesting for ourselves and our fans. People will be surprised but not disappointed!"

Indeed, just some of the band's experimentation includes the upright double-bass on the swing-metal stylings of *Sixteen Dollars* and harmonica on the stadium-sized *Heaven Or Hell*.

"We want to use new instruments on every album," says Michael. "I wrote the riff and thought that a harmonica would work and I think it turned out pretty well."

It's not just in branching out into the unusual that Volbeat have continued to evolve and challenge their followers. *Who*

They Are has an opening that is unmistakably Slayer before sounding like Social Distortion in a brawl with mid-tempo Avenged Sevenfold.

"We love Slayer!" Michael enthuses. "It's funny, we had the working title of 'Our Slayer Song' for that track. We just wanted to push our metal a little further."

Firmly pushing their pedal to the metal as it were, the first single to be taken from the new album, *7 Seconds*, opens with a 'born on the bayou' banjo line before unleashing duelling guitars that echo prime-time Iron Maiden, and the album also boasts guest-spots from the likes of Napalm Death's Barney Greenway and Kreator's Mille Petrozza.

"It's all about branching out what people can expect from Volbeat," Michael reasons.

"I've been inspired by Johnny Cash and Elvis Presley and the elements of the 50s that you can hear in the melodies but this is our way of showing

people that we've also grown up listening to metal. I'm a huge Napalm Death and Kreator fan."

At the heart of it all, though, Volbeat have created a sound that is distinctively their own. *Fallen* is one of the finest songs that the band have put their name to with its 'Cadillac cruising down Route 66' feel, and *Beyond Hell/Above Heaven* defies convention in its ability to be equally experimental and familiar.

"I don't think we will ever feel like we have made the perfect album, but for now we're more than happy with this one," says Michael with a wry, knowing smile.

"THIS IS THE MOST RANDOM VOLBEAT RECORD WE'VE MADE"

MICHAEL POULSEN

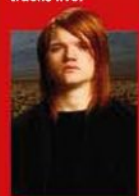
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SEPT 13
2010

BUZZ

FRESHLY CUT
PIECES OF NEWS!



Enslaved have announced a one-off UK show at London's Camden Underworld, on October 15. Ivar Bjørnson says, "Ash clouds, however metal and majestic they might be, put a stop to our April tour – we started working on scheduling new dates immediately, and we're ready to go! Enslaved is a band that enjoys being on the road like nothing else, we do take pride in being a hard working and increasingly energetic and focused live band. We are also very pleased with our new album due to be released in connection with this tour – and cannot wait to perform the new tracks live!"



After the departure of their drummer/singer/songwriter Aaron Gillespie, contemporary US metallers Underoath have been writing and touring with Daniel Davison, formerly of Norma Jean, on drums. The band posted a recent Twitter update in which they admitted that, although they intended to record their next album with Daniel, they said that he was not "confirmed as a permanent new drummer."

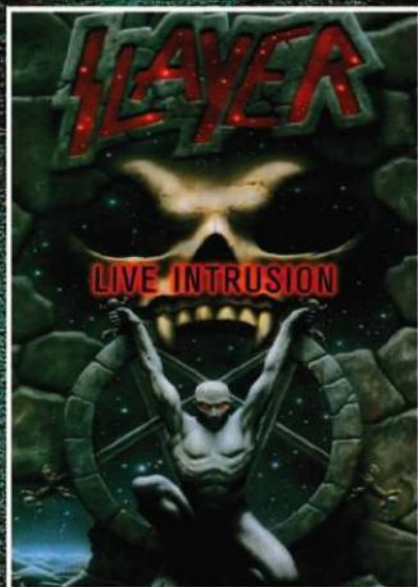


"There's a lot of stupidity in heavy metal" QUEENSRÿCHE'S GEOFF TATE... AFTER PERFORMING A SHOW WHILE WEARING A FEZ

SLAYER



PRESENT THREE LEGENDARY CONCERT DVDs



LIVE INTRUSION

AVAILABLE ON DVD FOR THE FIRST TIME

Filmed in Arizona on the *Divine Intervention* tour in March 1995, the concert features classic performances of *Raining Blood*, *At Dawn They Sleep*, *Hell Awaits*, as well as a cover of the Venom song, *Witching Hour* performed by SLAYER with members of MACHINE HEAD



WAR AT THE WARFIELD

FINALLY AVAILABLE AGAIN ON DVD

Filmed at the Warfield Theatre in San Francisco in December 2001, this features a *God Hates Us All*-heavy set and marks drummer Paul Bostaph's swan-song with the band. Extras include the promo video for *Bloodline* and a 48-minute documentary, *Fans Rule*



STILL REIGNING

FINALLY AVAILABLE AGAIN ON DVD

Filmed at the Augusta Civic Centre in July 2004, *Still Reigning* showcases SLAYER's 1986 album *Reign in Blood*, played in its entirety by the four original band members, as it also celebrates the return to the fold of drummer Dave Lombardo. Extras include an interview with the band, *In Their Own Words*

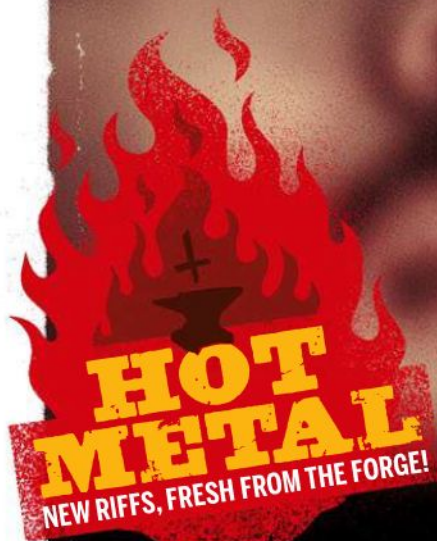
www.slayer.net



AVAILABLE AT

hmv
hmv.com

Your Demise (left to right): Daniel 'Oz' Osbourne, Jimmy Sampson, Ed McRae, James Tailby, Stuart Paice



YOUR DEMISE

ENGLAND IS AN EXCITING PLACE FOR BALL-CRUSHINGLY AGGRESSIVE MUSIC AGAIN, AND YOUR DEMISE ARE GIVING THE US A RUN FOR THEIR BEATDOWN!



our Demise have been pummelling UK stages with their own double-barrelled brand of punishing, beatdown-heavy hardcore since 2003. That's seven whole years.

We at *Hammer* pride ourselves on bringing you the bands that will grace your walls and dominate your iPods before anyone else and, in the case of Your Demise, we were never wholly convinced (even after the band signed to Visible Noise and released their really rather good *Ignorance Never Dies* in 2009) that they were capable of taking their craft and British hardcore as a whole to the next level. Then something changed. Something that took this band from mid-tier bruisers to a band that we're convinced could come to dominate British hardcore in the next 12 months. That change saw Your Demise up their game by becoming 'a band' for the first time and replacing former vocalist George Goebbels with Centurion's Ed McRae.

"The band was held up a lot due to the negativity and one-sided approach to how the band should be ran," admits guitarist Stu Paice. "Since Ed's been in the band, everyone's stood up to be counted, the profile of the band's risen, the shows have been better... everything around us is positive now instead of negative."

"What Ed has given us as a band..." says Stu, followed by a lengthy pause. "We appreciate what it's done for us."

What Ed has brought to the table is star appeal and a unique vocal style that borders between Terror's Scott Vogel and the UK urban scene. Don't get scared on us, it's not gimmicky and it's not like the dude's bowling around giving it "Na na naiiii", but it is an elbow-throwing

approach to hardcore vocals that's as fresh as a pair of Nike Air Force Ones straight out of the box while still sounding unmistakably British.

"I wouldn't call it an urban style that I've brought; I'd call it true hardcore," says Ed. "I'm a hardcore kid, I've always been a hardcore kid and I just bring bits of everything that I grew up listening to. I did what I wanted to do. I didn't hold back. I just brought what I wanted it to sound like to the old material. I did it how I wanted to do it and in my own style."

Regardless, on their tour with A Day To Remember and Architects earlier this year, YD (completed by Jimmy Sampson on bass, James Tailby on drums and Daniel Osbourne on guitar) were up against two of the biggest and best bands to break through in recent years and they were able to stand blow-for-blow with both. That they brought a couple of thousand people to the Pepsi Max stage at Download to put on one of the sets of the weekend, a set where the pit got so insane that all of the dust being kicked up made the band virtually blanketed and invisible, was next-level shit. The tail-end of this year sees YD's first record with Ed on vocals. It's called *The Kids We Used To Be*, and we can't fucking wait.

"It's not about interludes being different to what anyone's heard in hardcore," says Stu, in reference to the band dropping dubstep on their last album way before the Ministry Of Sound and Tek-One had cottoned on. "The songs themselves are different to what anyone has tried. It's essentially a hardcore record but there ain't a hardcore record that sounds like *this*."

The Kids... may take people aback. Whilst still unflinching in its hardcore approach, its pitro-thrust



"I COULDN'T BELIEVE I WAS IN THE BAND CAUSING THAT CHAOS"

pace makes it a little closer to the punk rock of Youth Of Today and Leeway than it does the metallic approach of Hatebreed and the band's own previous output.

"It's still a hardcore record, there's no doubt about that," confirms Stu.

"There's still a lot of breakdowns but it's faster and there's bigger, singing gang vocal moments. We grew up listening to Bad Religion, NOFX, early Madball etc and we named the songs' working titles after the bands we grew up loving. AFI, AM/PM (after the American Nightmare song of the same name), Madball, Terror, Weezer, Blink 182; they're all bands that we still love."

Perhaps the biggest change this time out is the feeling within the band itself. There's confidence that they can take on all-comers and a sense of unity that comes off of the back of having written an album as a collective for the first time.

"Every single member of the band wrote," confirms Ed. "We wrote as a band, people were tapping on the table, everyone brought something to the table and something that was really good."

"This is the album that YD should have written last time," says Stu, sternly. "There's stuff on the last record that I'm embarrassed about. I don't want to talk bad about the band but it's the sort of thing that wouldn't have happened if there'd been a democracy

WTF?



FROM St. Albans, Herts THEY SOUND LIKE

Bone-crushing HC played by snot-nosed kids at breakneck pace. Add Ed McRae's UK grime-tinged vocal flair and you have got something very special indeed.

FIND OUT MORE

www.myspace.com/yourdemise

in the writing process. This album is truly Your Demise. I'm not saying the album's pos as hell but there's a lot of positivity around the band right now, that's obvious to hear on the album and to see at the shows and you'll hear and feel that on the record."

"When we played in the day at Download, I couldn't believe that that many people were going crazy for my band," he continues. "I couldn't believe I was in the band causing that chaos and that's how I feel when I listen back to the album. I can't believe we've made something that's this fucking good."

We ask the band if they're up to taking the Pepsi challenge with some of the best hardcore bands the world has to offer when they hit our shores for the Never Say Die! tour in October and Ed's reaction is as exciting as it is instantaneous.

"Fuck yeah! We took the Pepsi Max challenge with every band on the Pepsi Max stage at Download and we think we did alright. There are some amazing bands on that bill and we're going to be bringing something different of our own to the stage every night and there's no reason why we can't stand out on our own merits."

Your Demise. It ain't cocky if you're able to back it up, and these guys do just that.

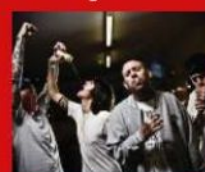
THE KIDS WE USED TO BE WILL BE RELEASED THIS AUTUMN VIA VISIBLE NOISE

ALSO TRY...



TRAPPED UNDER ICE

Grass-roots hardcore from the mean streets of Massachusetts. Fist-pumping beatdowns, adrenaline-junkie bursts of pace and a classic US vocal style in the vein of Sick Of It All and Terror. Their live shows are the stuff of legend too!



DEEZ NUTS

No-nonsense hardcore from Oz. Mixing riffs that are bouncier than a sumo wrestler on a trampoline with a head-nodding urban flavour and some of the catchiest hooks within the world of modern hardcore. Moshing Matilda? Believe it.



GIVE UP THE GHOST

Or American Nightmare, as most of us remember the band. Some of the nastiest, blood-spitting, pit-ready hardcore of the past 15 years, they split in 2004 but their nose-breaking influence is still heard on 80 per cent of hardcore records today.

TEOAT (left to right): Steve Whitworth, Jack Delaney, Sam Brennan, Matt Pugh, Jack Mouldsdaile

HOT METAL
NEW RIFFS, FRESH FROM THE FORGE!

"FOR THIS NEW ALBUM WE'VE... HOW CAN I PUT IT...? STOPPED WANKING ALL OVER OUR MUSIC"

SAM BRENNAN

THE EYES OF A TRAITOR

THE UK IS A HOTBED OF HEAVY MUSIC AND THE EYES OF A TRAITOR HAVE TRADED IN GUITAR NOODLE FOR HEADBANG BOUNCE.

WTF?



FROM
Herts, UK

THEY SOUND LIKE

A band who can play ludicrously well putting it to melodic use, and not just noodling in 13/16 time for 11 minutes for the sake of it. Architects meets Lamb Of God meets Meshuggah.

FIND OUT MORE

www.myspace.com/theeyesofatraitor

The Eyes Of A Traitor are champing at the bit. Their debut album, *A Clear Perception*, created a groundswell in the underground in 2009 and they're already back with its successor, *Breathless*, in 2010 for French label and home of Gojira, Listenable. The band have already hammered the UK scene with their crushing live performances and pulverised our European cousins on tour with The Chariot and Iwrestledabearonce.

Despite the blitzkrieg activity, chief-songwriter and drummer Sam Brennan feels they spent too long away after their debut and is keen to rekindle the wildfire of their debut. They've come a long way, baby.

"For this new album we've... how can I put it? Stopped wanking all over our music," he explains. "We're cutting the fat out: unnecessary shred bits, technical bits that don't need to be there. They almost take away from the song as opposed to add to it. Now they're just catchy hard-hitting songs: songs that are going to come off better live, and we had that in mind while writing it."

It is an astute observation that we can become desensitized to even the most miraculous things through over-exposure. Mindful of this, the mostly teenage troupe have used restraint to emphasise more within the music. As such, *Breathless* is a giant slab of forward-thinking British metal, another evolutionary step from the band's hyperactive and gloriously naïve debut.

"On the last album we were a lot younger and all into metal and only metal but we've grown up and opened our minds. Metal's still our first passion, but different genres have a lot to offer in terms of inspiration. We'll even listen to mainstream music that's on the radio and think, 'Ooh, that was clever, how can I translate that into something heavy and make it work for us?'"

Sam also cites an electro side-project as test lab and training ground for getting his metal in shape. But don't worry, it's not as if the album sounds like Moby.

"I've always been into stuff like Meshuggah and that European sound, Soilwork, In Flames and our guitarist listens to a lot of clinic and session musicians' albums – Joe Satriani and Steve Vai and Tony McAlpine. Actually, Jack [Delaney, vocalist] was quite into nu-metal in about 2000 and even though it faded out, his love for it never faded with it..."

The maths adds up. Technical musicians making heavy music with bounce. Party hard.

The band (completed by guitarists Stephen Whitworth and Matthew Pugh, and bassist Jack Mouldsdaile) may only be aged 19 to 22 but they still have a lot to say. Jack Delaney has injected a lot of vitriol into his words, with recurring themes of his own life experience igniting a fire in his belly.

And before you say, what the fuck business does a drummer have writing songs? Surely Sam should be out snorting hamsters and setting fire to his pubes? Well, may we direct you the lauded songwriting drummers of Underoath, Dream Theater and Atreyu. Sam is the creative driving force in the band. For their debut, the collaborative process was clunky and slow, so for their second Sam worked alone on the music "churning out ideas with my guitar" before taking things to the band.

"With the last album it was all done via MIDI," he says. "We'd exchange MIDI files with each other and it was quite a long-winded process. But for this album I've taken the reins."

With Sam's singular vision, The Eyes Of A Traitor have never been more creative and driven. Get in.

BREATHLESS IS OUT NOW VIA LISTENABLE

KANE & LYNCH DOG DAYS

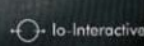
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"It has a true intensity to it that most shooters lack." IGN



GAMING'S MOST NOTORIOUS CRIMINALS RETURN 20.08.10



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NEW! DOWNY! HEAVY FOCUSING METAL!
INCREDIBLE!



Cut thine hair

Robb Flynn

Oh Robb! Our ears are still ringing from the first time we heard *Davidian*. Truly, you are so metal and your band is so awesome that we can forgive anything... even *Message In A Bottle*, Tarzan impressions and that bloody tracksuit! But what in the name of all that chugs possessed you to go for the novelty toilet brush look? The horror!



GUILTY!

Chris Cornell

You "grew out of" long hair and Soundgarden split up. You made a so-so solo record, formed Audioslave and bored us shitless, then made a record so bad we cried. In short: no hair = you suck.



GUILTY!

Metallica

You're kings of metal, responsible for some of the greatest records of all time, but with haircuts ill-befitting of your stature. It started when you made *The Black Album*. You earned lots of money and after buying paintings and expensive brandy you couldn't resist a snip. And then *Load* happened, a calamitous decline that only halted with *Death Magnetic*. Imagine how awesome *Re-Load* would have been if you'd had proper metal hair!

GUILTY!



Exodus: nine studio albums and still no sign of slowing down



EXODUS

THE BAY AREA THRASH LEGENDS RETURN AFTER THREE YEARS WITH THE NEXT EXHIBIT.

Formed 30 years ago in San Francisco, California, Exodus were one of the first thrash metal bands and arguably the genre's definitive representatives, not least due to their classic debut *Bonded By Blood*. After a brief hiatus in the 90s, founder member Gary Holt resurrected the band and returned with a vengeance for 2004's *Tempo Of The Damned*. Since then Exodus have recorded and toured relentlessly. Their new album, *Exhibit B: The Human Condition*, is insanely heavy and out now via Nuclear Blast Records.

THE NEW ALBUM IS SERIOUSLY EPIC. HOW MUCH WORK WENT INTO PUTTING IT TOGETHER?

Gary Holt (guitar): "A lot of work goes into it, but the process itself is always the same. It starts with writing riffs! We don't sit and analyse anything or decide that it's got to be epic or the songs have got to be short or long. We just write the record that we feel like writing at that moment, and this is what we wanted to write this time. It is super-long and it's a little more old school than the last couple of records. We are all really happy with it!"

THE BALLAD OF LEONARD AND CHARLES IS ABOUT SERIAL KILLERS LEONARD LAKE AND CHARLES NG. WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THEM?

"Because I think those guys deserve some more recognition, man! Leonard

Lake and Charles NG were some of the sickest of all. People always talk about Jeffrey Dahmer and stuff like that, but those two were truly as depraved as it gets. When Rob [Dukes, Exodus vocalist] was looking for something to write about, I suggested them and so he did some research and came back saying, 'Man, they were fuckin' sick!' Ha ha ha!"

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE THRASH REVIVAL OF THE LAST FEW YEARS, CONSIDERING THAT YOU WERE AROUND AND VERY ACTIVE LONG BEFORE THE NEXT GENERATION CAME ALONG?

"There are some great young bands like Evile, Warbringer and Bonded By Blood, and they're carrying the torch. But we've always waved the flag. It's what we do. Suddenly it's a bit more popular than it was in the past and that's great. We're happy about that. Maybe there's a little bit of a thrash revival going on because Exodus has worked their ass off for the last seven years non-stop!"

CAN YOU STILL FIT INTO THE JEANS YOU WORE BACK IN 1985?

"Oh, fuck no! Ha ha ha ha! But I am fitting into a slightly smaller jean than I was wearing a few months ago. But come on, I used to wear a women's size three! I couldn't get one leg into both legs of my old jeans, man!"

EXHIBIT B: THE HUMAN CONDITION IS OUT NOW VIA NUCLEAR BLAST

WHAT?

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HAMMER

METAL MONDAYS

ROCK RADIO



Hammer Editor Alexander Milas presents the Metal Hammer Magazine Show on Rock Radio 10pm-1am

with the best classic hard rock and metal. Join the Dark Lord and guests on 96.3FM in Scotland, 106.1FM in Manchester or www.rockradio.com from 10pm-1am.

SCUZZ

Heavy fucking metal on the tele-fucking vision! The best rock and metal station on telly brings you a load of wicked shows to bang your heads to! August 7-8 is *Scuzz Live Weekend* featuring Slipknot, Metallica, Korn, A7X and fuck-tons more. Saturday August 7 is *Scuzz @ Sonisphere 2010* with interviews, Backstage Bedlam and live performances. Wednesday Aug 18 is a top 40 video countdown as picked by us! Friday August 20 is *Slipknot Night* with live performances, videography, interviews a Slipknot takeover and more! New to Mondays at 10pm is the *Antiques Rock Show* where Scuzz drag out some classics as well as showcase new skids on the block. Want to get your band's video on TV? Even if your video is proper guerilla send it into Scuzz Underground. We're after bands with talent not big budgets. Tweet @scuzztv and we'll give you more details on the new show!

HOT TOPIC

HAMMER Podcast



The Hot Topic Metal Hammer Meltdown continues to bring you the latest news, rumours and heavy polemic each week for absolutely nish! Listen online at www.metalhammer.co.uk/ podcast or subscribe in iTunes for the latest news, review and chat!

Airbourne: not a fly-by-night band



Hard Rock Hell

HELL AWAITS

AIRBOURNE ANNOUNCED FOR HARD ROCK HELL IV!

That's right, the band who lay waste to every venue they play are coming to Prestatyn Sands, North Wales for Hard Rock Hell IV: Pirates Of Prestatyn on December 3-5.

As well as Airbourne, more acts have been announced including Saxon, Tigertailz, Dumpy's Rusty Nuts, Gentlemen Pistols, Fatal Smile, 9xdead, Attica Rage and also special Thursday night appearances from Headrush, Gypsy Pistoleros and Welsh locals Blind Ambition.

As well as recent additions, New Jersey legends Skid Row and German Axe hero Michael Schenker's MSG have already been announced with sleaze'n'glam triptych Enuff Z'nuff, Pretty Boy Floyd and LA Guns bringing a little taste of the Sunset Strip to North Wales. There will also be quite a few boys from the NWOBHM era including Paul Di'anno – who will be playing the first two Iron Maiden albums as a UK exclusive – Blaze Bayley, TANK and legendary hard rock acts Diamond Head, UFO and Uriah Heep.

Saxon: standing tall



Blaze Bayley: who glares wins

This year's HRH has been themed as Pirates Of Prestatyn, which organisers say was the people's choice, so you can expect some wild dressing up all through the weekend. Due to the ludicrous success of last year's sold-out Thursday night shenanigans, Hard Rock Hell will start on December 2 for the HRH diehards. VIP packages include entry to said Thursday night's now-notorious happening as per last year, but tickets have already sold out. For anyone who's booking Silver or Gold packages, they can still add the Thursday night on for only £25 per person, which will get you another night's accommodation, plus loads more bands and all the nutty fancy dress fun.

Prices start from £99, which includes two nights' accommodation and entrance into all arenas (based on six people sharing a Silver package). HRH IV is already over 90 per cent sold out at the time of going to press, so be quick if you want to attend. For tickets, call 08700 110034 or see the website. Check out www.hardrockhell.com for more info.

WORLD

THIS IS JUST A TRIBUTE...

HAMMER TO PAY HOMAGE TO BLACK SABBATH WITH TRIBUTE CD.

Don't forget to pick up next month's issue, which comes with our very special *Black Sabbath Tribute* CD featuring covers of Sabbath classics. This is the next in the *Metal Hammer* series of tribute CDs. So far *Metal Hammer* have created tribute CDs for Dimebag, AC/DC and Judas Priest by inviting bands to specially record exclusive covers.

These tracks won't be available elsewhere – so make sure you buy your copy, on sale August 25!

As well as nine Black Sabbath covers, there are six awesome tracks from some of the hottest new bands around, including Australian's Mourning Tide, London extremists Demagogue and Nottingham nu metal revivalists, Spirytus. Don't miss it!

THE TRACKLIST...

1. **Turisas** - Supernaut
2. **Absolute Power** - Hole In The Sky
3. **Cavalera Conspiracy** - Electric Funeral
4. **Amon Amarth** - Children Of The Grave
5. **Apocalyptica** - Spiral Architect
6. **Karma To Burn** - Never Say Die
7. **Orange Goblin** - Symptom Of The Universe
8. **Turbowolf** - The Wizard
9. **Ted Maul** - Killing Yourself To Live

THE BONUS TRACKS ARE:

10. **Mourning Tide** - We The Creepie
11. **Spirytus** - Bullet Ride
12. **What The Night Brings** - Sewn Shut
13. **Demagogue** - Encounter
14. **The Bental Interlude** - Cat Spats
15. **Ravenface** - The Resurrection



Amon Amarth: grave on!



Iron Maiden: rocking the 'Sphere



Ihsahn: shades of glory

GIGWATCH

ROCKING YOUR WORLD SOON: BLOODSTOCK, ILSAHN, SONISPHERE...

SONISPHERE is the big news, having confirmed a wedge of new additions to their awesome bill: **GOOD CHARLOTTE** will be appearing as well as **CHROME HOOF**, **EARTHTONE9**, **LITTLE LONDON**, **OUT OF SIGHT**, **STRAIGHT LINES**, **TIGER PLEASE**, **CONVERGE** and **KYLESA** will be playing an exclusive festival set each. Slacker metalhead comedian **BRIAN POSEHN** will also be doing his debut UK festival set. Sonisphere takes

place at Knebworth House July 30-August 1 and will be headlined by **RAMMSTEIN** and **IRON MAIDEN**. **36 CRAZYFISTS** and **DEVILDRIVER** will be in the UK from November 5-14, this tour is not to be missed! *Metal Hammer Subterranea* is sponsoring Norway's **HOLE IN THE SKY** festival in Bergen and includes a week of events happening from August 22-28, starting with a show from Gallic masters **GOJIRA** and including sets from **VENOM**, **CATHEDRAL**,

IHSAHN, **TRIPTYKON**, **SUFFOCATION**, **OBITUARY**, **WATAIN**, **THE DEVIL'S BLOOD**, **ROTTING CHRIST**, **ANGEL WITCH**, **EVILE** and many more. **ARCH ENEMY**'s rescheduled UK tour will be hitting the streets November 23-27 and includes support from **ENSLAVED** and **SABBAT**. **SABBAT** have their own string of dates in August: 16 Bristol Bierkeller, 17 Leeds The Well, 18 Glasgow Ivory Blacks, 20 Nottingham Rock City, 21 London Underworld, 22

Wrexham Central Station. **CHIMAIRA**'s tour starts on September 30 and sees the guys playing round the UK until October 17. **DARK TRANQUILLITY** are in the UK for a very special one-off show at London's Underworld on September 28. **PURIFIED IN BLOOD** – who you can read about on page 34 – will be in the UK for four nights from August 16-19. *Hammer* is also sponsoring the one-off show by **IHSAHN** at The Electric Ballroom in London on August 19.

BLOGS OF WAR

OPINIONS FROM METAL'S FRONTLINE

DOM LAWSON

OZZY OSBOURNE: STILL THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS



Controversial sage Dom Lawson argues the case for Ozzy Osbourne being one of

the most underrated singers of all time, with many deriding his rhythmic and melodic simplicity despite the fact it created the blueprint for heavy metal for years to come. Ozzy's latest album, *Scream*, proves that far from being simply a mascot, he remains one of the most driven and (re)inventive metallers ever.

MÖRAT

LEMMY CLEAR MY THROAT



US-based *Hammer* scribe and punk aficionado Mörat recalls his greatest

encounters with Lemmy Kilmister and explores why he's the greatest rock legend of all time. It is, after all, the Motörhead icon who named the mohawked writer all those years ago! Despite his British heritage, Mörat has spent the biggest portion of his professional life reporting on all things heavy from the City Of Angels, home to one of Lemmy's favourite watering holes, Sunset Strip's Rainbow Room. And with Lemmy being from Stoke, there's an ex-pat bond too.

MICK WALL

METALLICA: ...AND THE MEMORY REMAINS



Mick Wall delves back into the distant reaches of his memory and

remembers first time he ever met thrash titans Metallica. As well as the revealing story of the Bay Area legends, Mick tells us a little more of what we can expect from his upcoming Metallica book. His last tome, *Star Trippin'*, was a unique voyage into the past to tours with Van Halen, Poison, Def Leppard and more, and throws the lid open on what the heady days of sleaze and glam were really like.

GET IT ALL AT METALHAMMER.CO.UK

Periphery: from out of nowhere, straight onto Roadrunner!



PERIPHERY

CHARTING NEW TERRITORY PERIPHERY COMBINE INDUSTRIAL-TINGED METAL WITH POST-HARDCORE, MATHCORE AND ELECTRONICA.

WTF?



FROM
 Maryland, US
THEY
SOUND
LIKE

Fear Factory meets Meshuggah meets Underoath. Mechanical precision with a human vocal edge and forward-thinking electronics.

FIND
OUT
MORE

myspace.com/periphery

Out of the blue come Periphery with their groundbreaking eponymous debut album. In fact, the Marylanders' first effort was so impressive that metal behemoths Roadrunner Records snapped them up for Australia and the UK. The album is a fresh combination of moody yet melodic post-hardcore and angular mathcore rhythms. The technical elements, however, are neither self-congratulatory nor impregnably heavy, and the clean singing remains ominous not whiny. We're not sure if we've ever heard anything quite like this before...

"It isn't something that I thought of doing specifically," explains Periphery mainman, Misha Mansoor. "I like a lot of different things and maybe in a very ambitious way I just tried to get everything I like into an album. I like heavy parts, I like melodic parts, so we just tried to fit everything I like into a song."

He predictably cites Meshuggah as a big influence, and you can clearly hear the stuttering syncopated rhythms of the seminal Swedes in the mix as well as

moments of Coheed And Cambria and Porcupine Tree. More surprisingly are obscure leftfield influences from the world of dance music, hip-hop and electronica.

"Nowadays we take a lot more influence from electronic music and fusion," he says. "Guitarists Guthrie Govan and Allan Holdsworth are two huge influences on me. We also draw from electronic stuff like Telefon Tel Aviv [the Chicago-based laptronica outfit], Prefuse 73 [glitchy trip-hop producer] and [Norwegian digi-jazz troupe] Jaga Jazzist."

"I don't think of my music as technical – there may be moments that are technical, and there are songs that are difficult to play, but that's never a goal."

The band have been through four singers in five years. Three would be damning, five is just careless. Why did they all leave?

"Because we're a bunch of assholes," he laughs. "We have a very specific vision for the kind of people we want in the band, and that's not just the talent but the attitude and determination. I hope it's not because we're a bunch of assholes."

PERIPHERY IS OUT NOW VIA ROADRUNNER

FIRING RANGE

WHAT THE INDUSTRY'S GOT ITS SIGHTS ON



SYLOSIS

JOHN DAVIS
 PROMOTER HAMMERFEST /
 HARD ROCK HELL

It's very easy to call yourself a thrash band, but to sound like a true thrash band on vinyl as well as live on stage takes some talent. Sylosis deliver on all fronts. This a solid UK outfit at its best with a set of balls that will crack heads and leave neckache for miles around. Watch out for them, you'll definitely hear them before you see them... I'll be having another blast in Ibiza with them shortly.

MYSPACE.COM/SYLOSIS



WHILE SHE SLEEPS

BECKIE SUGDEN
 AGENT/THE AGENCY GROUP

Having first seen these guys in Kettering, after several of my acts said I should check them out, I wasn't disappointed. With some beautifully constructed songs and an energetic and convincing live performance, they had me grinning like a Cheshire cat. Their brand of metalcore is nothing new but they do it so well. Their debut mini album, *The North Stands For Nothing*, is just out. Be sure to catch them at Sonisphere.

MYSPACE.COM/WHILESHE SLEEPS



ARMS OF THE SUN

MARK EGLINGTON
 AUTHOR/JOURNALIST

Hailing from Dallas, Texas these guys are less oppressive than Pantera, more upbeat than Down, with distinct echoes of Soundgarden. Probably because the project involves ex-Pantera and current Down bassist Rex Brown, King Diamond drummer John Luke Hebert, vocalist Lance Harvill and guitarist Ben Bunker.

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DEFENDER OF THE FAITH

METALLERS WHO TURN
IT UP TO ELEVEN!

Paul Gregory

Paul Gregory is the co-founder and promoter of Bloodstock but, as he tells *Hammer*, it was all rather accidental. "I met a guy to talk about a website design but after a long conversation we decided to create Bloodstock." And so, in 2001, Bloodstock was born: an indoor festival in the heart of England with Saxon as its inaugural headliner. It's since gone from strength to strength whilst still staying independent, playing host to the likes of In Flames, Cradle Of Filth and Lacuna Coil.

"We lost money on that first one," he laughs. "But it grew and grew until we sold out the venue in 2003, so we took it outside, and it's since grown even more. I bought out my business partner and brought in my daughters as directors to help run it."

Anyone who's been to Bloodstock will know that apart from the bill (wall to wall tr00 metal), the best thing about Bloodstock is the atmosphere: a buzz of unity and community rare amongst big festivals.

"The key to its atmosphere is its size," he says. "We don't want to be huge because that's when a festival loses its identity and individuality."

And Bloodstock screams that, with the hordes of people dressed up as orcs, Vikings, robots and everything in between. To celebrate its 10th birthday, Bloodstock 2010 (August 13-15) features a stellar bill including performances from Opeth, Twisted Sister, Fear Factory and Children Of Bodom amongst many others.



The Gregory family: as metal as they want to be



Blind Guardian:
fresh out of Mordor

"IT WOULDN'T
FEEL RIGHT TO
WRITE A SONG
ABOUT OBAMA"

HANSI KÜRSCH

**BACK
IN BLACK**

SALUTING METAL'S
RETURNING HEROES!

BLIND GUARDIAN

GREAT MUSIC CANNOT BE RUSHED AND, WITH THEIR FIRST ALBUM IN FOUR LONG YEARS, THESE GERMANS ARE IN NO HURRY.

Inspired by the colourful zest of Queen and Tolkien's *Lord Of The Rings*, Blind Guardian have spent more than quarter of a century perfecting a fantasy-themed strand of power metal. Four years after their last album, *A Twist In The Myth*, it's time to unveil their ninth release, *At The Edge Of Time*.

YOUR LONDON SHOWS HAVE GROWN FROM THE ELECTRIC BALLROOM TO KOKO AND NOW SHEPHERD'S BUSH EMPIRE. IT SEEMS BLIND GUARDIAN ARE STARTING TO MAKE AN IMPACT HERE.

Hansi Kürsch (vocals): "It's been quite a fight, but we hope so. Like the US, Britain is an up-and-coming market for us. The timing really feels right."

IN THIS DAY AND AGE, HOW CAN YOU SING SONGS ABOUT ELVES, WIZARDS AND VIKINGS WITH A COMPLETELY STRAIGHT FACE?

"It's inseparable from the mood of the music. I know that some native English-speaking people might see that as amusing but it's the literature that moves me, and it works as a perfect storyboard for a band like Blind Guardian. For me, it would not feel right to write a song about Obama."

THIS IS THE THIRD TIME THAT A GAP OF FOUR YEARS HAS SEPARATED AN ALBUM. CAN'T YOU WORK ANY QUICKER?

"Not really. We tour each album for 18 months and that does not permit writing for a new album; we are either suffering to get through

or enjoying ourselves too much. Each album must be different to the one that came before and we are very picky as writers and producers. The albums become like giant jigsaw puzzles."

DO THEIR GESTATION PERIODS AFFECT PEOPLE'S EXPECTATIONS POSITIVELY OR NEGATIVELY?

"Maybe a little of both. One problem we are aware of is the short-term thinking of people in general. Will they wait around for four years for a new Blind Guardian album? Last time around we feared that it might cost us some new listeners but there were still some 15-year-old kids in the front rows at the shows. With the new album, only time will tell."

IS IT A GENUINE ORCHESTRA ON SACRED WORLDS AND WHEEL OF TIME, THE TWO EPIC TRACKS THAT BOOKEND THE WHOLE RECORD?

"Yes, we used a real orchestra in Prague. It worked out magnificently in my opinion."

IS THERE GOING TO BE A THIRD ALBUM FROM DEMONS & WIZARDS (THE BAND YOU FORMED WITH ICED EARTH'S JON SCHAFFER) ANY TIME SOON?

"Jon and I have been discussing that quite a bit but time is an issue for both of us. I believe there's still more to come from Demons & Wizards, and we may get together and do some songs, but I don't see there being a new album until 2012 or 2013."

AT THE EDGE OF TIME IS OUT NOW VIA NUCLEAR BLAST

WHAT?

Overblown, dark and blood-splattered. Blind Guardian were immensely flattered that the makers of the *Lord Of The Rings* movies gave serious consideration to their offer of contributing to its soundtrack.

FOR FANS OF
Iced Earth, Helloween

MUST-HAVE CLASSIC
NIGHTFALL IN MIDDLE-EARTH
Virgin, 1998

FIND OUT MORE
blind-guardian.com



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MORE INK FROM THE WORLD OF METAL

TATTS LIFE

GLAMOUR OF THE KILL

Davey Richmond

What does the rose on your neck signify?

"If you look closely, in the centre of the rose is a little skull. It's part of a life and death theme – my tattooist designed it with that in mind. On the back of my neck I have an anchor. I got it done on the last day of a massive tour we did. The tattooist that did lots of my left sleeve did it to celebrate the fact that we'd just sold out the Newcastle Academy – I love it."

Tell us about this life and death theme that runs through your tattoos.

"Yeah, most of my tattoos revolve around life and death. A lot of my right arm is just about death. I have a severed horse's head that represents Shergar – the horse that went missing after the Grand National in 1981. A lot of my family love horse racing and there's the Shergar Cup here in York, where I'm from. I just love dark stuff like that. I've got a severed crow's head too – I want as much of that stuff on my body as I can get."

Any hidden ones?

"I do have a letter 'D' behind my ear. It's a bit chavvy but it's just a D for my name."

What's that line across your stomach?

"'Kneel down ye sinners' is a Mötley Crüe lyric. It's a bit naughty really. It's for the girls when they're well... you know..."

You have a lot of tattoos – which one came first?

"I got a little star on my left forearm when I was 16. Because I was young its meaning isn't of great significance – it was just a last-minute thing, I was silly."

Tell us about the tattoos on your hands.

"I got them done on my 21st birthday in Leeds by Steve Byrne. He's an amazing artist and I wanted to get someone good to do my hands because they're always on show. They represent life and death as well. On my left hand I've got a severed Grim Reaper's head and on my right I've got a rose which represents life as well as being a Yorkshire rose. I have 'show time' on my knuckles. People always have 'live fast' and so on – I stayed up for hours trying to think of something that no one else has. Before we go onstage the boys will ask what time it is, and I'll hold up my knuckles and say, 'Show time!'"

Is that Jack Skellington from A Nightmare Before Christmas on your wrist?

"Yep! I love Tim Burton films so I had to do it. Next I got loads of bits and bobs, like this moon above Jack. I tried to fit it all in with the Nightmare... theme."

FAN TATTS

The best of readers' band ink



★ Jonny Gibbs / Devin Townsend



★ Yohanna Derksen / BLS



★ Pablo / Dimebag Darrell

TATT-DOS AND TATT-DON'TS

"Always make sure that you don't rush into getting a tattoo – you have all the time in the world. Your whole life, in fact. You've got to make sure that it's perfect for you and that you're going to love it for years to come. It also may seem cool that your friend has bought a tattoo gun off eBay but don't let them touch you unless they're really good!"





PLASTIC HEAD PRESENTS



THE ACACIA STRAIN
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(PROSTHETIC)

Ferocious new album from these highly rated US metallers.... headlined GHOSTFEST 2010 with GALLOWES in June!

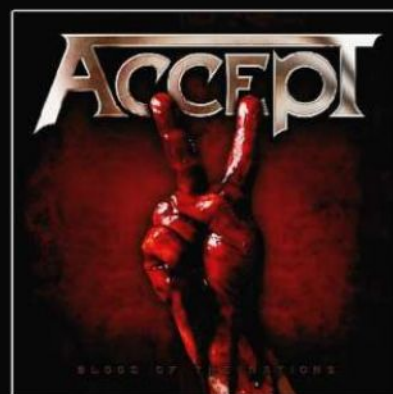
OUT 02/08/10



BLIND GUARDIAN
'AT THE EDGE OF TIME'
(NUCLEAR BLAST)

Germany's No.1 power metal act are back!!

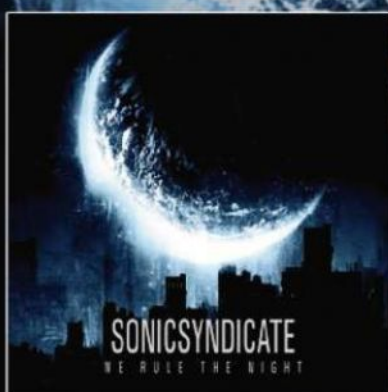
OUT 02/08/10



ACCEPT
'BLOOD OF THE NATIONS'
(NUCLEAR BLAST)

Reformed metal legends return on song with their latest ANDY SNEAP produced album

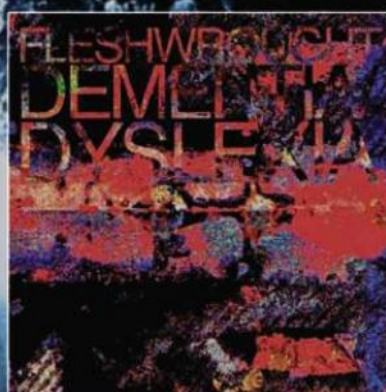
OUT 23/08/10



SONIC SYNDICATE
'WE RULE THE NIGHT'
(NUCLEAR BLAST)

With a new vocalist and updated quality of song writing, it is now time for Sonic Syndicate to break out of the underground with their 3rd album for Nuclear Blast

OUT 30/08/10



FLESHWROUGHT
'DEMENTIA/DYSLEXIA'
(METAL BLADE)

Forward thinking extreme metal project from JOB FOR A COWBOY's Jonny Davy and ANIMOSITY's Navene Koperweiss

OUT 02/08/10



RETURN TO EARTH
'AUTOMATA'
(METAL BLADE)

BUMBLEFOOT (Guns n' Roses) produced cutting edge progressive rock. Features CHRIS PENNIE (Dillinger Escape Plan/Coheed & Cambria)

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(CANDLELIGHT)

New band featuring BURTON C. BELL (Fear Factory) and BYRON STROUD (Strapping Young Lad, Fear Factory, Zimmer's Hole)

OUT 02/08/10



THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
'ZOMBIE EP'
(FERRET)

New 5 track concept EP from this highly successful US metal act

OUT 23/08/10



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NEW! BOMBAY! HEAVY PUNISHMENT METAL!
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Tomas, Doro and Ol stopping by Hammer HQ to weigh in

THE BIG QUESTION

WHY AREN'T THERE MORE TRUE METAL FESTIVALS IN THE UK?

SAM, PLYMOUTH

With Bloodstock being geared more towards a 'true metal' crowd (even though it's more diverse than that implies), it's important to learn from what's worked in mainland Europe because they're not all the same. Sweden Rocks works perfectly with a bill that leans more towards traditional and British bands. The festival does amazingly well and that's in a country that's smaller than the UK, so in the UK of all places, you could do more that's aimed towards the traditional metal fan.
TOMAS, MESHUGGAH

UK bands started metal! There could be more put into a festival like Bloodstock and more emphasis on catering for a traditional metal audience. Bloodstock is amazing and that they

cater for the traditional metal audience is great but there could be even more emphasis on that kind of thing here in the UK. It seems to cater more for what they believe in than what's going to bring people through the door.
OL DRAKE

The best thing about Bloodstock is that it's run by a family and is treated like a family. It's run by fans and for fans and that's doing things in the right spirit and that's what keeps it in the true spirit of metal. I've not met the family that run Bloodstock yet but when you put your heart and soul into something, it really shows and it makes you feel like you belong and there can always be more of that in the world. It makes you feel part of something more than some of the bigger festivals.
DORO PESCH



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CHAINMAIL

HAMMER ANSWERS YOUR WAR CRIES!

TAT TRIBUTE

On the morning of June 10, a group of us were due to set off to Donington for Download 2010. Sadly one of our group committed suicide during the night and we were obviously unable to attend the festival. He left us all letters and to those of the group that had attended the Slayer gig at Manchester Academy on May



30 he wrote that it was the best night of his life. A few of us decided that with the beer money we had saved for the

festival we would get memorial tattoos done, and with Slayer being the best night of his life I decided that the band logo would be the perfect tatt to get. As you can see, I had 'Slayer' taken out of the design and replaced with the date of his death and added a few choice words at the bottom.
DAN JONES, EMAIL

A fitting tribute, Dan. We were all moved to hear of this tragedy and our thoughts are with you, your friends and your friend's family.

WAR IS ANSWER

I am a soldier currently deployed in Afghanistan. We have limited access to the internet and it seems that

I am missing out on what is happening in the metal world. For example, I had no clue that As I Lay Dying had released a new album. Soooo, I was wondering if it would be at all possible to get some issues of your magazine sent here for myself and all the metalheads here. It would be appreciated greatly.
DANO WALDFOGEL, EMAIL

Consider it done, soldier!



Dano Waldfogel and his buddy, Jorge May

MEGA'PETH

I want to thank a very special band, Opeth. Their music is incredible! Their songwriting skills are amazing. They are, in my opinion, the best band in terms of technicality and skill, especially because their music is one of a kind. So thanks for all the simply outstanding music guys, and keep defending the faith!
THEO, AUSTRALIA

Opeth are one of our favourite bands too Theo, from the heavy and the early to the acoustic and the most recent - Opeth are truly one of the best contemporary heavy metal bands. And they're great guys to boot!

COP A LOAD

I've been a metal head since the age of 12 and I'm now 32. AC/DC have been my favourite band since I can remember but for various reasons over the years I've never been able to see them live. That was until June 11 when I had the greatest night of my life watching them perform live at Download! I had such a hard time not crying with joy when I saw Angus duck walking across the stage. A big horns up to Andy Copping for making my dream come true!
KEV FULLER, EMAIL

Andy Copping says: "I love this guy! I feel like Jimmy Saville, without the tracksuit, on Jim'll Fix It! It's great that people get such enjoyment

TEXT OFFENDER



New Norma Jean will probably sound just like all the other 'core bands trying to be Killswitch Engage.
TOM 'BACON' MASSEY

Pantera are simply the best band in history, period!
RASMUS JONSSON

Hahaha Atreyu's Brandon looks like a massive skinhead! lol
DAYLE BROWN

That's naut metalz! :)
MARK CRONIN

out of Download. We seem to be getting bigger and better each year thanks to the fans. See you in 2011!"

DANZIG-A-ZIG-AH!

Thank you, *Hammer*, for giving well-deserved recognition to Glenn Danzig and his excellent new album. As a fan of his for 24 years, I know he has a reputation for being difficult with rock journalists, and for you to see past that to the influence his music/imagery has had on the metal/alt scene does you great credit. The fact that you were able to pitch the tone so cleverly as to get him to open up, whilst not depending on sycophancy shows that Greg Moffitt really earned his beer tokens this month. Also, Roger Lotring's review was a perfect representation of the new album. Here's hoping that your articles will help a



The Sunny shines on Mr Danzig

new generation discover an artist who has influenced so many, from an at-the-time-unknown Metallica in their garage, right through to Dommin and A7X today. DAVE LLOYD, EMAIL

Thanks Dave, we're all Glenn fans here too, and as you say, the man deserves our respect for both influence and output.

HOT METAL

Your mag rocks! I've been listening to metal for years now and *Hammer* is the only magazine that I buy. When I was reading the feature about Glenn Danzig I couldn't help but notice there was a very attractive model with him. Can you tell me her name?

MATTHEW, EMAIL

We concur, Matthew. The lady's name is Sunny Leone. Have fun in Google...

DATS NOT DA METULZ

Just looking at recent *Metal Hammer* Facebook posts: the latest Bring Me The Horizon one has 263 comments while the very next post, about Dimmu Borgir, only has 33... complaining is metulz?? JARED WASILEWSKI, EMAIL

It never ceases to amaze us how divisive Bring Me The Horizon are. It just seems that people who complain do it louder than those who praise.

AS I LAY TOURING

I am getting really, really annoyed with bands announcing a so-called UK tour and having, like, three dates... e.g. As I Lay

Dying. Sort them out, will you. *Hammer*? JAMES BENNETT, EMAIL

Absolutely. Hi, is that Tim Lambesis? Yeah, it's *Hammer*. Few more dates, yeah? Cool, bye. Job done.

RAISE THE TONE

I looked up Earhtone9 after their mention on the *Hammer* podcast. I tried to download their compilation album off their site but the download failed twice. I emailed them, and the guitarist sent me a copy! Legend! Thanks for the recommendation. It's the fourth band after Cancer Bats, BMTH and Skindred that I've got into thanks to your epic podcast. JAMES GARDNER, EMAIL

It's so great to have the awesome Earhtone9 back. Fingers crossed for a new album!



BMTH: you love 'em, you love 'em not...

ASK JURGEN!

SEND DEATH THREATS TO WWW.MYSPACE.COM/JURGENTOKSVIG



Kind, School Of Cock med bla Go West: The Village People Movie i en av rollene. Vi inviterer deg over til å høre litt på låtene våre og at du vil adde oss som friends. MAURICE, VIA MYSPACE

Jurgen says: "Faen heller, Engelsk jævell! Be paying the attention - "Red sky at night, shepherd's delight", not "Red sky at night, burn down a church"..."

Dear Jurgen, What is the quickest way to a boy's heart? SU, VIA MYSPACE
Jurgen says: Through his chest with a circular saw. Aiiieeeee! I am only making the joke. Buy him six cans of Stella, tickets to a football match and a litre of poppers and he will do literally anything.

Dear Jurgen, I love you. I love you. I love you. I LOVE YOU. MAGRETH, VIA MYSPACE

Jurgen says: Such talk has enraged Nils. He says he will take your message out on me violently in a boxing match. At least that's what I think he means when he says he wants to come up behind me and batter me around the ring.

Dear Jurgen, When do you know that you have had enough to drink? AMY, VIA MYSPACE

Jurgen says: When whatever you put in your mouth tastes of Jager, when you start feeling like you've been fucked in the eye-socket by an angry carthorse, when you try and set fire to a church but later find out it was your own house, when you find yourself saying, "You know Nils, this Mumford And Sons song is not so bad... then perhaps it is time you went to bed for an hour or two before starting again.

Dear Jurgen, Take our blue pills for throbbing, javelin big like on Blue Man in *Watchmen*. Course of ten pills make you command like Sexy Hitler in bedroom. You will understand soon when you take our blue pills that the area in your pants will be classified X-files! You will demonstrate to girls like Paris Hilton and Britney Spears how your bigger manhood will result in joy. MISS AMBER NECTAR, THE IVORY COAST

Jurgen says: Mmmmm. Big blue man in *Watchmen*. Where is my chequebook?! Aieeeeeee!



Dear Jurgen, What do I do about the necrowhere at my school who described the mighty Svarttjern as "a man screaming in the rain"?! GEORGE, VIA MYSPACE

Jurgen says: It is true that Hans Fyrste is a bit of a screamer and he is often to be seen enjoying a golden shower, but give that lady a tongue lashing.

Hei Jurgen, Café du Man Stripper er et nytt spennende Norsk club/gay disco band, med et meget unikt sound. Musikken er allerede brukt i amerikanske porn film produksjoner som skrekfilmen Close Encounters Of The Turd

Sonisphere a week after High Voltage? I'm gonna die! But with a huge smile on my face! HARRY LAWRENCE

I don't like A7X either, but would you stop calling them gay? ANGUS WOOD

Porcupine Tree's new video: was that robot sucking the female robot's tits? JARED WASILEWSKI

36CF rule and I'm glad they're supporting a good band like DevilDriver. CHRISTOPHER BECKETT

N'li me vocare, ego te vocabo

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NEWS COMMENT HEAVY METAL INCOMING!



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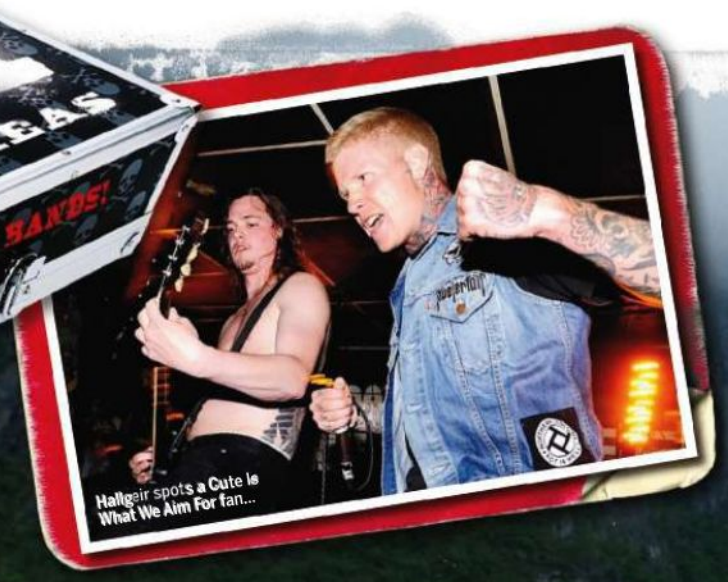
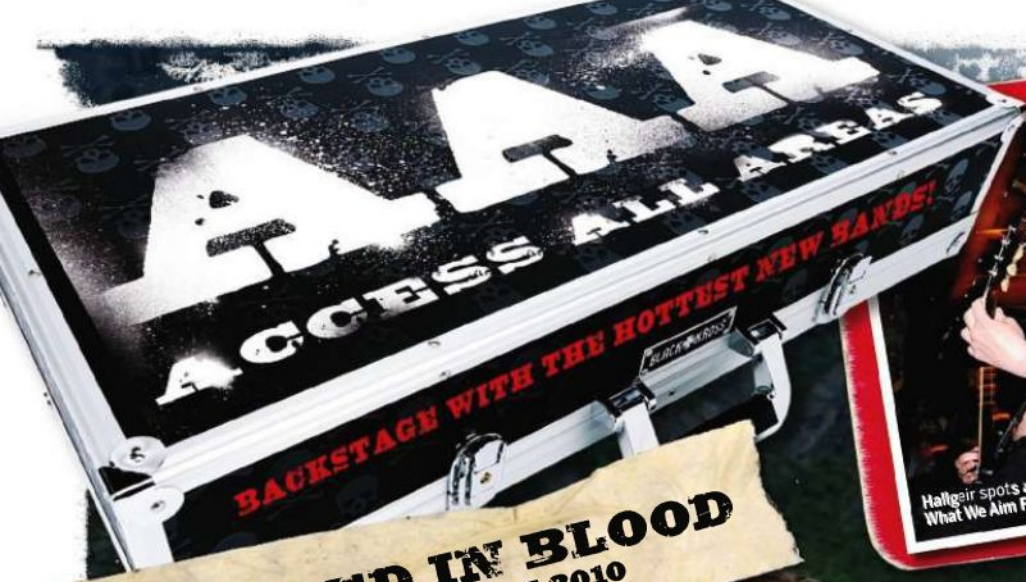
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PURIFIED IN BLOOD

STAVANGER JULY 2010



"OUR FIRST TOUR IN THE STATES WAS PRETTY POLITICAL. THE FBI SEIZED OUR CAR"

HALLGEIR ENOKSEN

Anders Mosness: poster-boy for the dangers of drumming without sticks

PURIFIED IN BLOOD ARE A BAND WITH A MESSAGE: **HEAVY METAL RULES. THEY TOOK HAMMER UP A MOUNTAIN TO PROVE IT. CHRIST KNOWS HOW WE ENDED UP AT A SNOOP DOGG GIG...**

FJORD FIESTA

WORDS: ALEXANDER MILAS. PICS: ESTER SEGARRA.



The fjord of Gloppedalsura is temple of solace and rugged, otherworldly beauty. Two mountains plunge into the sea where rising mist connects with the clouds while a cold, soaking wind erases the memory of summer. It's this breathtaking and harsh vista, as Norwegian as can be, that in 1940 was the site of a ferocious battle between 250 victorious Norwegian defenders and two German battalions. And it's here, miles inland from the metropolis of Stavanger, that local hellraisers Purified In Blood have chosen to film a video for *Under Den Svarte Himmel*, or *Under Black Skies*. As they reveal, the conflicts here aren't over.

Purified In Blood were formed by school friends in 2003, when they carved their identity as hardcore, activist vegans. They have since evolved into non-preaching headbangers with a message of environmental responsibility, socio-political awareness, and above all a love of heavy fucking metal – not a world away from nature-loving headcrushers Gojira. And, by the looks of singer Hallgeir Enoksen, guitarists Tommy Sveta and Sander Lown, bassist Stig Andersen, and drummer Anders Mosness, they don't mind lifting a weight or three. They've already spent ten hours in the cold holding torches, striking poses, climbing around the boulders, and wearing next to nothing. It has to be said: tattooed to extremity and rippling with muscles you can't name, they do not look like anyone you'd want to fuck with, like, ever.

"Hello there!" says Hallgeir with a broad smile and the kind of handshake that grinds bone into sand. "How do you like our summer?"

Well... it's raining and freezing. It's metal. "Want to climb a mountain tomorrow?" Oh shit.

We scamper under a tent erected by Tommy's dad – a chiselled outdoorsman who's supplied a tent and euphorically good coffee – as the crew shuffle about and a random man who looks

rather like a balding Jesus adjusts his codpiece. Amazing what seems normal in this context.

"Yeah the video's like a dream sequence," explains Tommy. He produces an iPad with stills from the previous days' shooting – it's all there: fjords, a drum kit on fire, a bonfire, random smaller fires, and Jesus. "So," he says, giggling, "Snoop Dogg's playing later. We going?"

You joke, but it's cold. Why the fuck not?

It's a lengthy drive back into town inside a beat-to-fuck Volkswagen van painted with flowers and stuffed with clothes, hiking gear and random guy crap. When they're not touring in it, PIB stuff it with longboards and, like many here surf the big, arctic swells in thick wetsuits. Still, it's a mottled contrast to the SUVs and brand new sportscars that seem to overpopulate the highway. Pentagram whispers through the stereo as Hallgeir explains that Stavanger is one of the country's richest cities – it's here that Norway's oil industry was born.

"Oil money is all dirty money," says Tommy. "It's like drug money. The guys who are driving the nice cars are the ones who make the shitty decisions to destroy the Amazon, to take stocks in the weapons industry, to kill natives..."

"We're not preaching with our music; we're talking about what we believe in but they're metaphors," explains Hallgeir. "I had a great job in engineering but I had a problem with what it was doing to the world. Now I work with kids with drug and behaviour problems, as does Tommy."

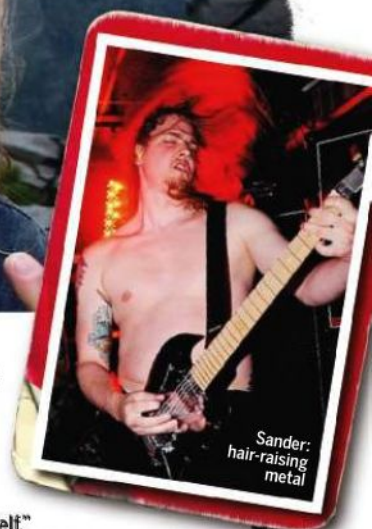
But these idealists weren't always so passive. Their first tour of the US a few years ago was with their initial inspiration, Earth Crisis, whose politics are as radical as their brand of hardcore. "The FBI were at the shows," explains Hallgeir. "Our car got seized and searched – there were some radical speakers there from Earth Liberation Front. They draw a lot of negative attention from authorities.

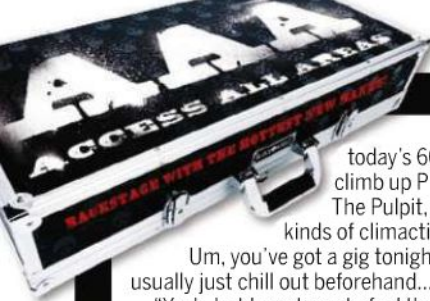
We all got into that kind of stuff when we were 14. We were all vegan. I'll eat meat, but only if I've paid respect to the environment and killed the animal myself."

As PIB reveal, their original staunchly held views began to decay as some members' resolve waned. Frustrated and estranged from each other, they broke up in January 2007, only to reform a year later when they decided that the scorching potential of their debut *Reaper Of Souls* album was too good to let lie. No longer bound to any straightedge lifestyle, they opted to focus on the music, and on remaining friends.

We pull up to an outdoor arena where Snoop Dogg's onstage. It may as well be Mars. Drove of affluent-looking kids, many of them under 10, dance *really badly* with their parents and a throng of heavily hairstyled, spraytanned young Moby fans. Anders declares that Snoop, with his ring of bling and Mr T jewellery, may just be the Joey DeMaio of the hip hop world. We sneak backstage for a photo with the great man. Brick shithouses in suits guard every corner while groupies stand in a queue for a dressing room door helpfully labelled, 'Dogg.' Occasionally the door opens to the sound of blasting bass-beats as smoke billows out, and a few more are let in. Then more... *annnd* a few more. This photo ain't happening, so we decant to an aftershow party where Anders, looking like the lovechild of Garth from *Wayne's World* and Grizzly Adams, decides the only way to entertain himself is dance with as many women as possible.

"You're gonna freeze to death." Yours truly has just rolled out of bed for a crack-of-dawn meet-up and Hallgeir is unimpressed with the Behemoth t-shirt because the weather for





NEWS COMMENT BEATY FUCKING METAL
INCOMING!

today's 600 metre-climb up Preikestolen, or The Pulpit, promises all kinds of climactic kick-fucking.

Um, you've got a gig tonight. Most bands usually just chill out beforehand...

"Yeah, but I want you to feel the mountain," says Hallgeir. Our ancestors were connected to the place they came from. That's died, but we're reconnecting with it."

It's at that point that the parallels between PIB and more famous Norwegian bands become clear. Like so much black metal that's been exported from these shores, they too have a desire to embrace the ways that predate the advent of Christianity. Not out of religious belief, but environmentalist conviction.

We arrive at the base of The Pulpit. Mercifully, low-slung clouds obscure the way up, creating the illusion that the journey ahead won't be nearly as painful as it appears. A boulder-strewn, rocky incline plays the part of a path. Holy fuck, Hallgeir's sprinting upwards!

"He's just showing off," says Anders, who adds that he's a survival fitness instructor in his spare time. Oh, joy...

We make our way up the geological staircase. (Editor's note: smoking is bad for you. Never wear denim in the rain.)

An agonising hour into the tree-lined sojourn, thoughts drift from music to Norse mythology. Some pretty hikers pass us making their way down – Anders gets some pictures with them, calling them 'huldra', or harpy-like denizens of the forest that the Vikings believed abducted wayward men. Yeah, sure, Anders.

"No, it's true! Hey Ester get another one..." he says, directing Hammer's snapper to get a few more of the alleged nymphs.

It's hard not to be overcome by the rugged beauty of the place, the stillness and silence of a rocky mount bathed in fog and downpours. It's stunning, Tolkienesque, and bloody dangerous – a peek over the edge of the summit reveals a sheer drop into milky depths below. If only there was a song that summed up this feeling of triumph, of conquest, of...

"Manowar! Manowar! Manowar! Born to live forever more! The right to conquer every shore! Hold your ground and give no more! Manowar!"

A group of tourists look at Anders with a mix of amusement and slight terror. We obligingly make the Manowar sign of the Hammer, and – having drunk deeply of the surroundings – descend toward Stavanger. A gig at Checkpoint Charlie awaits, and they sell beer. It'll be 90 minutes of crushing riffs – *Mouth Of Doom* – is as stately as it is colossal, *Under Black Skies*: like Gojira with the singer hanging from the rafters, literally. It's a continuous mosh – a frenzy of motion on stage and off. Anders beats his drumkit like he's trying to kill it – he'll reveal severely bloodied hands later – as Tommy bounces aside him as Hallgeir is the embodiment of screaming menace. It's thrilling, overwhelmingly loud, and – at times – fucking scary. Purified In Blood are ready to explode. They can't raid these shores soon enough.

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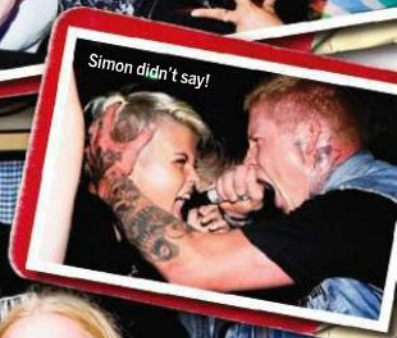
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"SNOOP DOGG KIND OF REMINDS ME OF MANOWAR"

ANDERS MOSNESS

Sign of the Hammer (left to right): Stig Skog Andersen, Tommy Sveta, Hallgeir Skretting Enoksen, Sander Loen, Anders Mosness



ROCK BY NUMBERS

602

Metres it takes to each the summit of The Pulpit.

0

Number of Snoop Dogg security men who look amused at our presence.

14

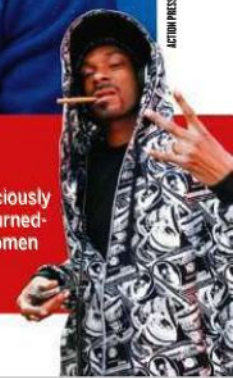
Number of forest nymphs Anders introduces himself to.

3

Number of times yours truly slips and nearly brains himself on a rock.

17

Suspiciously well-turned-out women in Snoop Dogg's backstage area.



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SEX TO LED
ZEPPELIN IV.
STAIRWAY...
ALONE WOULD
BE LONG
ENOUGH TO
SEE MOST
GUYS DONE
AND DUSTED!**

▼▼ **VINCE NEIL**

DISCOS OF DOOM

THE GODS OF METAL CHOOSE THE ALBUMS THAT SHAPED THEIR LIVES
WORDS: JOEL MCIVER

VINCE NEIL

THE FIRST' ALBUM I HAD SEX TO IS...

LED ZEPPELIN

IV Atlantic, 1971

"Hmm, that's a tough one – but if I remember right, this album was playing in the background at the time! Ha ha ha! It's amazing. The song *Stairway To Heaven* on its own would be long enough to see most guys done and dusted!"

THE FIRST' ALBUM I BOUGHT' WAS...

DEEP PURPLE

COME TASTE THE BAND EMI, 1975

"I got this when it came out – it's pure rock'n'roll. It was a completely new sound for me at the time, because in my house my dad listened to stuff like Creedence Clearwater Revival and Johnny Cash. They were one of the very first bands I latched onto."

I BREAK THE SPEED LIMIT' TO...

JUDAS PRIEST

SCREAMING FOR VENGEANCE Columbia, 1982

"This would have to be something by Judas Priest. What's that album with *Electric Eye* and all those other great songs on it? *Screaming For Vengeance*? There you go! It has some guitar work that makes you want to go for it – it's hard to explain why, they just sound great and have that effect on you."

THE ALBUM THAT BROKE MY HEART'...

MÖTLEY CRÜE

GENERATION SWINE Elektra, 1997

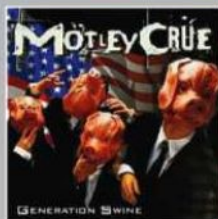
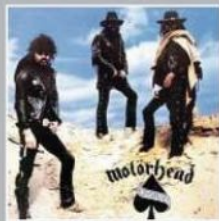
"I know some people like *Generation Swine*, but I just didn't think this album was very Mötley-sounding. The only good song on that whole album was *Afraid*, and I think that was probably it. Then again, you could probably say the same thing for *Theatre Of Pain* [1985]; there were only two good songs on that record, and one of them was a cover!"

THE ALBUM I WISH I'D MADE IS...

AC/DC

HIGHWAY TO HELL Atlantic, 1979

"I love AC/DC so much and this album still sounds so killer. I love *Back In Black* too, of course; any of the albums they released about this time are big favourites of mine. Actually I was just hanging out with [AC/DC singer] Brian Johnson in Dallas, not too long ago – we were staying in the same hotel, so we hung out in the bar for a while. It was great!"



THE ALBUM I'D WANT' TO BE REMEMBERED FOR IS...

MÖTLEY CRÜE

GIRLS, GIRLS, GIRLS Elektra, 1987

"*Doctor Feelgood* was our biggest-selling record, but I'm a *Girls, Girls, Girls* fan. I have a soft spot for that album, and also for the song itself. I just opened a Mexican cantina in the Hilton in Las Vegas and they stream Mötley Crüe videos inside it, and I saw that video yesterday. It's such a cool video: it's all about bikes and girls and how much fun they are."

A KID ASKS ME WHAT' METAL IS. I'D HAND HIM A COPY OF...

MOTÖRHEAD

ACE OF SPADES Bronze, 1980

"That's a difficult one, because there are so many amazing metal albums. It's gotta be something by Motörhead, for sure. Probably one of their most bad-ass albums, like *Ace Of Spades*. That's totally metal. Those songs are just timeless, even all these years after they were recorded. Yeah, I know Lemmy always calls Motörhead a rock'n'roll band rather than a metal band – we say the same thing too!"

THE ALBUM I'D WANT' PLAYED AT MY FUNERAL IS...

VINCE NEIL

TATTOOS AND TEQUILA

Eleven Seven Music, 2010

"Probably a Mötley album, like maybe *Girls, Girls, Girls*? Actually, I'm gonna take that back and nominate my own album. It would be perfect, because it would liven up the proceedings and make everyone drink tequila! It's got my entire life in there, so when I'm dead you can celebrate my life by drinking a shot and listening to the album."

NO ONE WILL BELIEVE I OWN A COPY OF...

GIPSY KINGS

THE BEST OF THE GIPSY KINGS

Nonesuch, 1995

"It's hard to say why I like the Gipsy Kings, but I love the beats and the music of this band. They're just really great tunes. I have no idea what they're saying, but the band makes me smile because they're so cool to listen to. Yeah, I always try and do that really fast hand-clapping thing that they do when I'm listening to the songs. It's impossible."

THE BEST' ALBUM ARTWORK IS...

IRON MAIDEN

NUMBER OF THE BEAST EMI, 1982

"Let's think – there are so many cool sleeves out there. Of all the metal bands, Iron Maiden always have the best artwork. In fact, the albums are all so great that I can't think of a single one that stands out, although a lot of people like *Number Of The Beast*, with the devil and Eddie. That is amazing."

SONISPHERE FESTIVAL
30TH JULY - 1ST AUGUST

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IRON MAIDEN

SONISPHERE
FESTIVAL
30TH JULY - 1ST AUGUST

Bruce only gets let out of
the psych ward for the show

THE VO

IRON MAIDEN once said they wanted to do 15 studio albums.



"PEOPLE ARE GOING TO THINK IT'S
EITHER THE LAST ALBUM OR THAT
WE'RE TREKKIES. IT'S NOT LIKE THAT"

STEVE HARRIS

Iron Maiden in San Antonio,
Texas in June 2010

YAGE HOME

Then they called album number 15 *The Final Frontier*. Is this the end of the parsec? Is it, fuck...

Words: Dom Lawson. Pics: John McMurtrie.

IRON MAIDEN

Bruce rides his invisible hovering bicycle

Sun(set) and steel



It's a hot and sticky summer day in San Antonio, Texas. As you walk out from your air-conditioned hotel foyer into the sweltering outdoors, possibly to head down the road to The Alamo, where Ozzy Osbourne famously took a drunken piss many years ago, the effect is like being subsumed in hot custard. The natives, as you might imagine, behave as if temperatures that edge towards the 100 degrees mark are the most normal thing in the world. The British, however, are stopped in their tracks and compelled to pull stunned, slightly alarmed faces. It's seriously bastard hot here and were it not for the fact that Iron Maiden are in town and about to hit the stage at the AT&T Center, one of the city's major indoor venues, *Metal Hammer* would probably be found cowering in a jumbo-sized refrigerator somewhere, in between bottles of Mexican beer. But this is the third show of the metal titans' brand new tour; a tantalising precursor to the release of their 15th album, *The Final Frontier*, and every self-respecting metalhead from the surrounding area understands their solemn duty. Sixteen thousand of them are crammed into the venue and making a vast amount of noise, primed by a sizzling set from support act Dream Theater and whipped up to fever pitch by the simple fact that there is no such thing as a half-arsed Iron Maiden gig.

In keeping with the science-fiction vibes of the new album's artwork and lyrical themes, *The Final Frontier* show kicks off with a suitably space-orientated intro and some ominous, otherworldly lighting, before guitarist Adrian Smith marches out onto the stage playing the thunderous opening riff to *The Wicker Man*, and all hell breaks reassuringly loose as the rest of Maiden storm the stage, as vital, ebullient and deafening as ever. Despite an occasionally vexed relationship with the US – the one country in the world

that seemed to require a bit of persuasion to fully embrace this incarnation of Maiden, even as the rest of the world went cheerfully batshit at their every move – Maiden are welcomed back as conquering heroes over here these days. On this occasion, two years after their *Flight 666* exploits and the whole *Somewhere Back In Time* tour cycle, the band are revisiting the music they have made over the last decade, since the return of Adrian and singer Bruce Dickinson helped to usher in a second golden age for this most enduring and consistently adored of metal bands. In stark contrast to the nostalgic majesty of that last round-the-world jaunt, the new Maiden set focuses primarily on songs from *Brave New World*, *Dance Of Death* and *A Matter Of Life And Death*, with just one song from the early days – the ageless *Wrathchild* – thrown in to the main body of the show, with a few old favourites appearing as welcome encores, as you may expect. Alongside the epic, bombastic likes of *Ghost Of The Navigator*, *Paschendale* and *The Reincarnation Of*

HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE BACK ON THE ROAD AGAIN AND PLAYING A SET OF SONGS FROM THE LAST DECADE, RATHER THAN FROM 20 OR 30 YEARS AGO?

Steve Harris: "It's actually a real challenge, especially starting off in the States, because the hardcore fans know the stuff but some of the other people here don't know it at all. You can tell! So it's more of a challenge, but we're enjoying it. As soon as we get to Canada and Europe it'll be very different, because they'll know the words to every song. But I think we've got to mix it up and keep challenging ourselves. The tour before last we did *A Matter Of Life And Death* and we did the whole album, so you just have to keep refreshing what you do, in front of any audience. I know people will moan that we're not playing *The Trooper* or something like that, but we played it on the last five, six, seven tours. We've never done things the easy way anyway. It's not just a question of being stubborn, it's about keeping it fresh for everybody."

"WE'RE NOT A CABARET ACT. WE WANT TO MOVE FORWARD"

ADRIAN SMITH

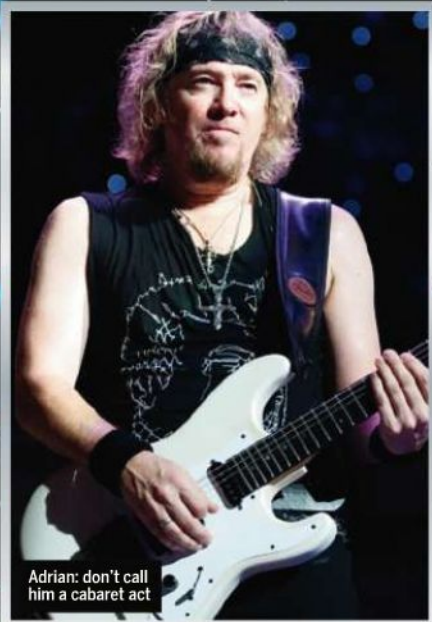
Benjamin Breeg, one new song, the monstrous *El Dorado* provides a uniquely fresh highlight. Available for the last few weeks as a free download, the song is both quintessential Iron Maiden and remarkably fresh and distinct from past glories; a thrilling teaser for an album that, when you finally get to hear it, is practically guaranteed to blow your mind and put a year-long grin on your face. The fact is, 30 years after the release of their self-titled debut album, Iron Maiden look and sound a long way from a band who are winding down and eyeing retirement. Speaking with Bruce, Adrian, bassist and founder member Steve Harris and drummer Nicko McBrain after another triumphant show has ended, *Metal Hammer* gets the distinct impression that this is simply the beginning of another chapter in this band's remarkable story.

IS IT MORE REWARDING TO PLAY NEWER SONGS THAN DOING THE WHOLE GREATEST HITS THING?

Bruce Dickinson: "It's really rewarding to play these songs if we can fuckin' remember them! Ha ha! But yes, it's great. I thought that *Brave New World*, looking back, was a classic album that came straight out of the box, but we haven't had that much chance to pay much attention to it. We're playing four songs from that album on this tour and they all sound completely incredible. But you can only really go by the audience reaction. Tonight was the first show where I actually found myself getting two thirds of the way through the set and thinking, 'Oh, it's almost over!' and that's when time seems to pass and you're in the zone, so that was really good..."

Janick Gers: Fender of the beast





Adrian: don't call him a cabaret act

Nicko McBrain: "There's no real difference for me but it's great to play this stuff. It's quite weird to think of songs that are 10 years old as *recent*. I like the balance we've got between the last four records. It's fresh for us to go back and revisit. It's always hard to know what to play anyway! *Somewhere Back In Time* was a celebration of the old stuff, but this isn't about that. It's a celebration of our last few albums."

Adrian Smith: "We don't want to be a cabaret act. We could probably play Vegas for the rest of our lives, but we want to play new material and keep moving forward. These songs are quite long and we thought it might be a bit tricky for the audience, but the response has been fantastic. In fact, I don't remember the response ever being this good in America. They've just been really into it."

WHY DO YOU THINK THAT IS? THE U.S. SEEMS TO LOVE MAIDEN NOW MORE THAN EVER...

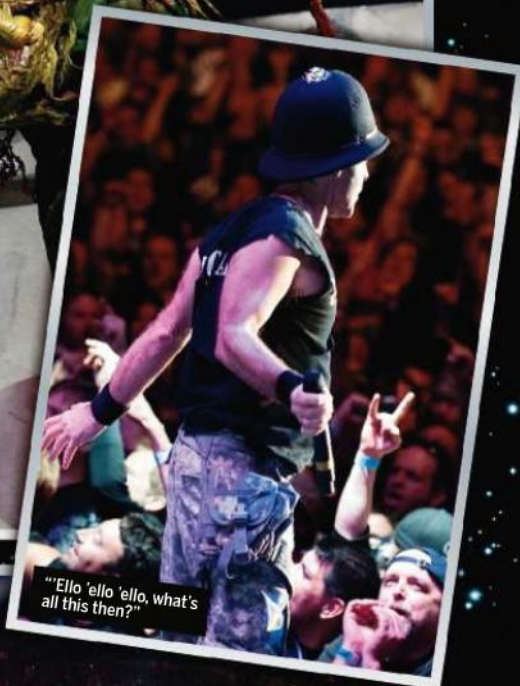
Adrian: "I noticed it when I came back into the band in '99, that there were a lot of new fans in Europe but America didn't seem to have changed. But thinking about it, on this tour there seems to be a lot of younger fans and the response has been a lot more *European*, if you like. In Europe the response is always great and we're floating on air out there, but in America you always have to work a bit harder because the audiences, funnily enough, are a bit more laidback. In Europe and South America they just go bonkers all the time, but here they're spoilt for choice, so you have to drive it harder. But yeah, it's been fantastic and a real surprise."

WHEN BRUCE AND ADRIAN REJOINED IN 1999, DID ANY OF YOU EXPECT TO BECOME AS SUCCESSFUL AS YOU ARE RIGHT NOW?

Adrian: "There was always that strong ambition in the band. When I got involved again, I spoke to everyone and it was clear that it was going to be more of a long-term thing. I didn't think it'd be *this* long. It's 11 years now and it seems like yesterday that we came back. I'm surprised on one hand that it has gone so big again, but it was always obvious that we were going to have a real crack at it. It's worked out pretty well!"

Steve: "I never thought this far ahead. You just see how it goes and you never get a clear indication of how something's going to work long term. Bruce was out of the band for a few years and Adrian was

Eddie's eyes were set to 'kill'



"Elo 'ello 'ello, what's all this then?"

Still think you could do what Nicko does?



"Scream for me, Texas!"

IRON MAIDEN

PANGALACTIC RIFFMASTERS

FIVE MORE SPACE-RELATED METAL CONCEPT ALBUMS.

BAL-SAGOTH

A BLACK MOON BROODS OVER LEMURIA, 1995

Although they described themselves as "extreme avant-garde baroque metal", Bal-Sagoth were fantasy and sci-fi buffs to the core. Their debut introduced fans to frontman

Byron Roberts' dark fantasy universe via songs with catchy titles like *Into The Silent Chambers Of The Sapphorean Throne* (Sagas From The Antediluvian Scrolls).

Over their next five albums, Bal-Sagoth would add

ever more detail to their cosmic vision, culminating in the ludicrous extravagance of *The Chthonic Chronicles*, "the end of the Hexalogy", according to Byron.

NOCTURNUS

THE KEY, 1990

A death metal band with a difference – they had a keyboard player, unthinkable in 1990 – Nocturnus were true sci-fi nerds and based their debut album on a story about a

rogue cyborg that travels back in time to OBC, resulting in the destruction of Christianity and a new, godless modern empire. With songs like

Andromeda Strain and *Droid Sector*, *The Key* was aimed at fans of *Star Wars* and *Star Trek*,

but only those who also liked brutal metal.

GAMMA RAY

SOMEWHERE OUT IN SPACE, 1997

Never afraid to embrace a ridiculous concept, German power metal mavericks Gamma Ray went the whole hog on their fifth studio album. *Somewhere Out In Space* is a

gloriously nerdy affair, covering all manner of intergalactic concerns, from opening song *Beyond The Black Hole's* tale of

uncharted territory to the self-explanatory *Men, Martians And Machines* and the

poignant but daft *Lost In The Future*.

VOIVOD

KILLING TECHNOLOGY, 1986

Not so much a concept album based on sci-fi, more an embracing of the genre's whole aesthetic, *Killing Technology* separated Voivod from every other band of the

thrash era by being both musically and lyrically bizarre. With brilliantly odd, futuristic artwork created

by drummer Away, the album even looked like something that had been beamed down

from space. Meanwhile, songs like

Forgotten In Space invited fans into a new and distinctly dark and menacing alien world of weirdness.

DEVIN TOWNSEND

ZILTOID THE OMNISCIANT, 2007

The story of an extraterrestrial being from the planet Ziltoidia 9, Devin's ninth solo record was reliably bonkers, even by his unique standards. *Ziltoid* arrives on Earth in search of "the

ultimate cup of coffee". What happens next isn't entirely clear, but it's accompanied

by plenty of Devin's futuristic metal and a whole

mess of silliness. Ultimately, what's not to like about songs called *Ziltoidia Attaxx!!* and, erm, *Tall Latte?*

Bruce gets suited and booted. Or booted at least



No, we didn't believe it was Nicko's first ever ice cream either



out of the band for a few years as well, but right from the start there was no problem whatsoever, and that surprised me! I thought there'd be a few teething problems, but that didn't happen at all. You don't really want grief in your life, do you? So it's been wonderful really. I think it helps that we've made some really strong albums along the way."

Bruce: "No, we didn't expect any of this and it's getting more silly by the day! I'm very cautious about people getting us to work too hard so that we end up going, 'We're not enjoying this any more', so whilst you don't want to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs, you can make sure it doesn't lay too many and you keep things chilled, and then I think we can keep ourselves going for a lot longer."

Steve: "Yeah, I think that's true. These days, in general, we're a lot happier and you can see that onstage. The first shows are always a bit edgy, as they are on any tour, but the feeling onstage is better than it's ever been – there's no reason why we can't carry on as long as we want to carry on. We're older and wiser and we don't argue about stupid things any more. Well, maybe once in a while, but it doesn't last five minutes! It's easier and a lot more amenable now. We know each other a lot better. We've always used things in a positive way, if you're feeling down or pissed off, turn it into a dark song. I did pretty much a whole album like that on *The X Factor*!"

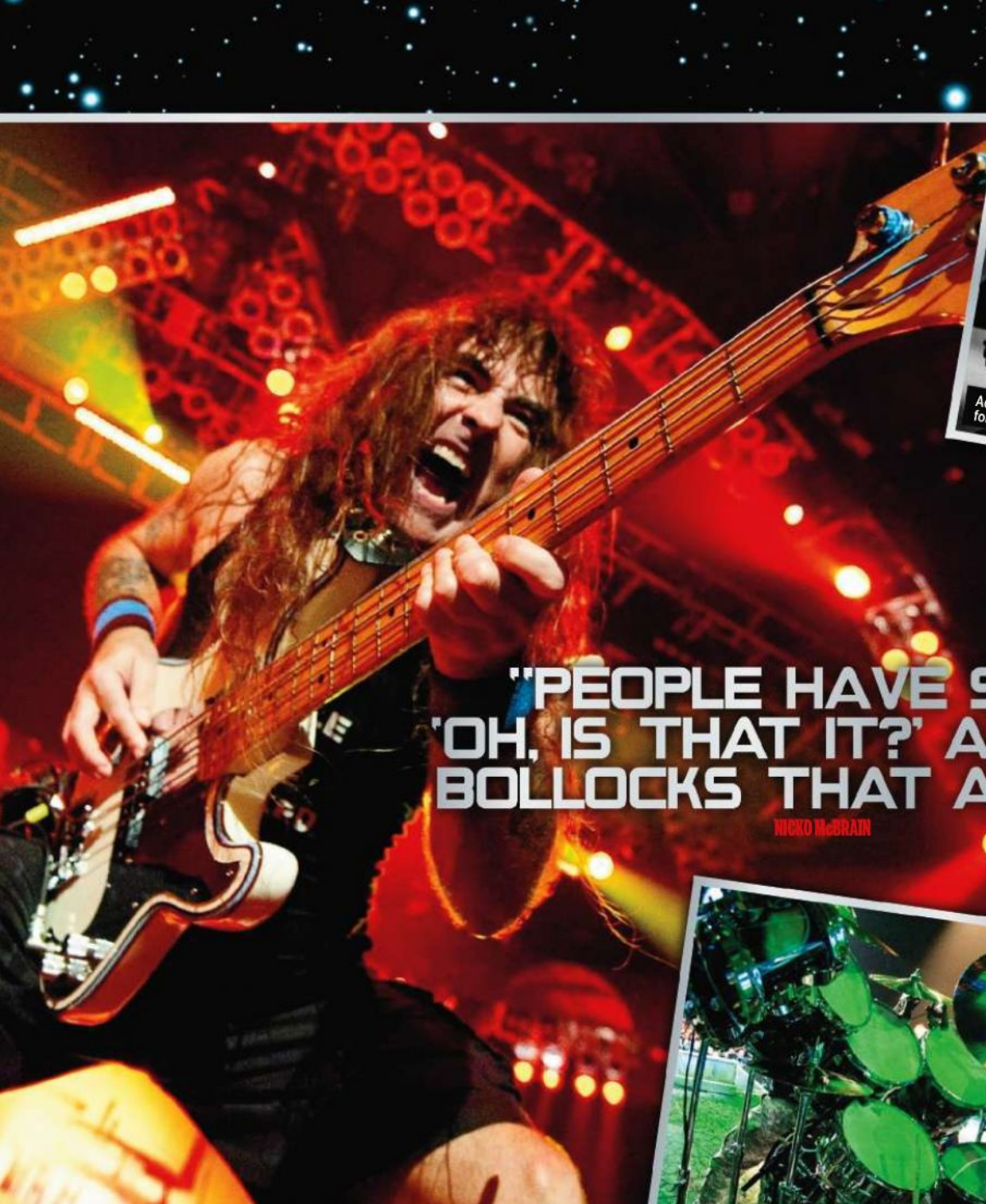
Life on the road is considerably easier for Iron Maiden in 2010 than it was 25 years ago, when they conquered the States for the first time. Travelling between shows on their own private jet and pacing their tours so that gigs on consecutive days are a rarity, the band have earned the right to do things their own way and are clearly enjoying the privilege and pleasure of seeing the world in comfort. Sharing a few post-gig drinks in the bar, they will chat excitedly about their trip to NASA headquarters in Houston the other day, when the band entered the Mission Control room, perfectly preserved from the days of the

original Apollo moon missions, and saw their own faces grinning back at them from the giant screens that hang on the wall in front of rows of desks and computers. After 35 years of doing this, the six members of Iron Maiden all still seem slightly surprised at how frequently they encounter fans in the unlikeliest of situations, but they also remain utterly down to Earth and philosophical about the whole thing, as if to allow a single shred of complacency or arrogance into their worldview would bring the whole thing crashing down around them. They needn't worry, of course, but it's hard to imagine certain other big metal bands exhibiting quite the same level of humility.

Everyone who cares about metal knows that Maiden are a special band; a band that transcends race, religion, culture and anything else you care to mention, and that generates a level of devotion that no other band, from any genre, comes close to matching. What is rarely acknowledged is the reality of how that has all been achieved. Without support from TV, radio, the vast majority of the press or any kind of accidental trend bearing them forwards, Maiden have become arguably the best-loved rock band in the world and the key to their ongoing success has been a combination of

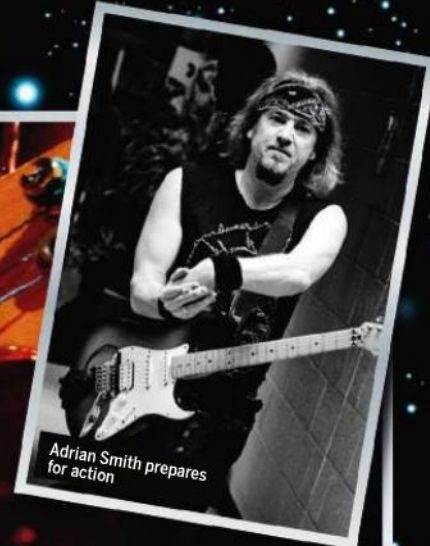
Iron Maiden: triumphant





"PEOPLE HAVE SAID,
'OH, IS THAT IT?' AND NO,
BOLLOCKS THAT AIN'T IT"

NICKO McBRAIN



Adrian Smith prepares for action



It's important to love your job

hard work and consistently great records. No smoke or mirrors. No bullshit. Listen to the new Maiden album, *The Final Frontier*, and you will hear a band still very much in love with their own music, enthralled by the opportunity to take their fans on yet another wild journey. From the swirling, future-metal lunacy of opening two-partner *Satellite 15/ The Final Frontier* to the monstrous *El Dorado*, yank-the-heartstrings ballad *Coming Home* to the balls-out sprint of *The Alchemist* and on through a clutch of astonishing epics like *Isle Of Avalon* and apocalyptic closer *When The Wild Wind Blows*, it's simply one of the best, not to mention bravest, albums that Iron Maiden have ever made.

YOU'VE BEEN BECOMING STEADILY MORE ADVENTUROUS SINCE *BRAVE NEW WORLD*. HOW DELIBERATE HAS THAT BEEN?

Bruce: "This album is probably the greatest departure from our sound, but it's been happening incrementally since *Brave New World*. But none of it is premeditated at all. I think the key is not to make albums that often. It's not a conveyor belt. But, when you do make something really interesting like this, you feel like, 'Oh, we should make another one!' We could just be bored by it all, but we're obviously not!"

Steve: "Albums we've done over the last few years and even stuff we did before that, like *Sign Of The Cross*, those songs stand up with anything we've ever done. They're a bit different, but why would you want *The Trooper* part two? EMI tried to

get us to do *Run To The Hills* part two back then – we told them where to go! What's the point in repeating old stuff? Fans will argue in the pubs 'til the cows come home about what we should be doing or whether this album is better than that one, but you can't take any notice of that. Should we send out a questionnaire or something? 'What would you like on the next album?' I don't think so! Ha ha!"

THE FIRST TRACK, *SATELLITE 15*, SOUNDS COMPLETELY UNLIKE ANYTHING YOU'VE EVER DONE BEFORE. ARE YOU DELIBERATELY MESSING WITH PEOPLE'S HEADS?

Steve: "We never have specific aims for anything and we never know what we're gonna write. We have no preconceived idea of what we're going to do. *Satellite 15* was a basic idea that Adrian had and I put it together with the words and it wasn't what he intended at all, but it sounds great! I was really excited about it, probably more than some of the other songs, purely because it was so different. It shakes things up. To still get excited like that... well, at my age, that's a great thing! Ha ha! It sounds kind of industrial to me, like film theme music, and that's great. It sets up the album great, with the title and the sci-fi feel and all that, and it does what it says on the tin! It could lend itself to being a live intro too."

Bruce: "We evoke the sci-fi thing in the song. The title of the album, I thought up 15 months ago. We hadn't written a song yet and I just thought 'We should call the next album *The Final Frontier*' because it sort of is... It could be, but it might not be! You go to the final frontier and you're in uncharted territory. It had a certain ring to it. It means we can go back to space for an Eddie and things like that, and we haven't done that for a while. It has a certain romance to it."

STEVE, YOU HAVE BEEN QUOTED AS SAYING THAT YOU ALWAYS PLANNED TO MAKE 15 STUDIO ALBUMS. IS THIS REALLY THE LAST ONE OR ARE YOU BEING A BIT MISCHIEVOUS BY CALLING IT *THE FINAL FRONTIER*?

Steve: "That's true. I've always said that I wanted to do 15 studio albums. Well, I haven't always said that. I started saying it after the fourth or fifth album I suppose, but I didn't even expect to do more than three when we first started! But yeah, there's probably a bit of mischief there, particularly on Bruce's part, but people

IRON MAIDEN

The new stage set in full

We're guessing
Dave's job is safe

Another day,
another stadium

"AS A SOCIAL PHENOMENON, MAIDEN REPRESENT SOMETHING ASTONISHING"

BRUCE DICKINSON

are going to think it's either the last album or that we're Trekkies, or both, and it's not like that really. It's just a really strong title. If that's how you want to see it then so be it, but it would be sad if we don't make another album, and sad for the fans too. We'll have to see."

Bruce: "Is it mischief? Yeah, of course it is! Ha ha ha! Because although we genuinely haven't made up our minds about another album, we thought that people are bound to say, 'Oh, it's the last album!' and so we'll just go, 'Not necessarily!' Ha ha! I don't know what we'll call the next one. Maybe 'Never Say Never'! Ha ha ha!"

Nicko: "I think everyone's being too fucking cagey! No, it ain't gonna be the last record. Not as

far as I'm concerned. The general feeling is that if we want to make another record, we will. You can never say never, and my personal feeling is that we'll tour the next album and play all the new stuff, you'll get a new stage set and all that, and then we'll make another album. *The Final Frontier* just suits the vibe and the moment. People have said, 'Oh, is that it?', and no, bollocks, that ain't it. Not unless the good Lord turns round and tells one of us it's time to go!"

WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO GIVE THE TRACK *EL DORADO* AWAY FOR FREE?

Steve: "It's the first time we've done it, but we knew we wanted to do some gigs in the summer and we didn't want to put the album out until August, and I did question that because it was quite unusual. But we decided to play one new song on this tour and we thought that people might as well hear it beforehand. It's a thank you to the fans but we knew that it would be on YouTube as soon as we played it, and of course it was! No matter how well we play it live, someone's going to record it on their phone, and it's not gonna sound as good, so we thought it's better to download the proper version instead. You do have to embrace new technology and what's happening now. And it keeps people guessing about the album!"

YOU'VE ACHIEVED SO MUCH IN RECENT YEARS. WHAT ELSE IS LEFT FOR YOU TO DO? DO YOU HAVE ANY UNFULFILLED AMBITIONS?

Bruce: "There are plenty of countries we haven't played that would be great. I don't think Maiden's over yet. I think as a musical thing, but also as a social phenomenon, there are countries, Islamic countries, where Maiden represents something really quite astonishing to kids. So we do stand

a chance of breaking a few barriers down, and there's lots of ways in which the band can break through. We'll have to wait and see what they are. You can't make them happen. It does seem that the universe keeps throwing us curveballs."

Steve: "When we got to India for the first time, people were saying the same things they say everywhere, like, 'We grew up listening to your band!' It was amazing. There seems to be other places like that as well. So as exciting as it is to go back and play for the fans that know and love you, and it always is, there's something refreshing about going somewhere new and you can't get away from that really. That drives you on."

CAN YOU IMAGINE LIFE WITHOUT MAIDEN?

Bruce: "It's not something I ever really contemplate, to be honest with you. If Maiden stopped being active, there would still be a sort of ghost of Maiden that would haunt the corridors! I think the only way to kill that is to do something dreadful and to go out with just one original member and it doesn't bear thinking about! Without all of us, it wouldn't be Maiden. We get back together, go in a room, muck about and you think... It is like the best fitting pair of jeans you ever had and you go, 'Oh, isn't it great to be back again? Everything's cool. It's all back!' The cap fits, you know?"

Nicko: "We'll rock until we drop, basically. But we won't rock if we can't cut it anymore. I still love to get up there and I can still keep my edge. If I pace myself, I can still rock it. Listen, anyone who thinks they can have my job, fucking forget it!"

Steve: "We're having a great time and we just go with the flow. We're not stopping yet, put it that way. It's nice, in the twilight years of our career, to have all this going on, to have our own plane and all that lark. You do have to pinch yourself sometimes. I'm not saying we deserve it, but we have worked our nuts off for many, many years and anyone who's been a fan for a long time knows that and sees the effort that we put into everything we do. So we'll take it, thank you!"

THE FINAL FRONTIER IS OUT AUGUST 16 VIA EMI. IRON MAIDEN PLAY SONISPHERE ON AUGUST 1

We know just how you feel, mate

Bruce is still reaching
for the stars

More at ebook-free

METAL HAMMER PROMOTION

DIE WITH YOUR SHIRT ON!

Iron Maiden are all set to release their 15th studio album, *The Final Frontier*, on August 16. It will also mark 30 years of Iron Maiden albums! And to celebrate the return of these bastions of metal, we have an *exclusive* Iron Maiden t-shirt which features both front and back print – the front with the new cosmic Eddie with expanded, exposed cerebellum and the back emblazoned with the album title. Each shirt is only £16.99 plus P&P – head to www.metalhammer.co.uk to order yours now! And don't forget Maiden will be playing Sonisphere at Knebworth on August 1. Offer closes August 30, 2010.

GET YOUR EXCLUSIVE IRON MAIDEN FINAL FRONTIER T-SHIRT HERE!



Alexander models the awesome, exclusive *Final Frontier* t-shirt (left). Also available is this exclusive *El Dorado* t-shirt! Get yours now!

GET YOUR EXCLUSIVE IRON MAIDEN SHIRT ONLY AT...
WWW.METALHAMMER.CO.UK

Lamb of God
IN INDIA

LAMB OF GOD, it's fair to say, aren't the fucking Backstreet Boys. When any acts remotely rock, the Summer Storm festival announced a counter-

BANGA OR

Lamb Of God in India (left to right): John Campbell, Mark Morton, Randy Blythe, Chris Adler, Willie Adler

**"THE STAGE IS
MADE OF
WOOD? ARE
YOU FUCKING
KIDDING ME?"**

JOHN CAMPBELL

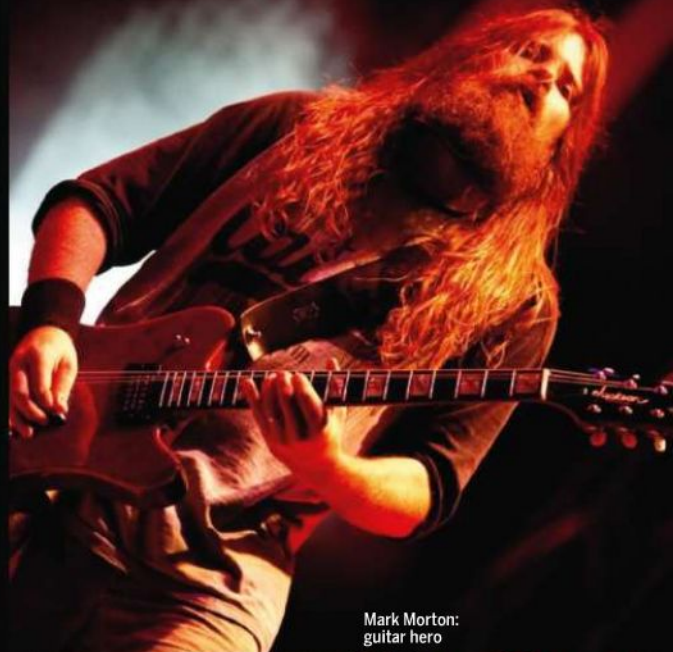


Yep. It's the same
the world over

Rock In India announced late last year its abandonment of strike and recruited the Virginian metallers as headliners.

LORE DER

Words: Manaswi Manjappa. Pics: Siddartha Menon/Bobbin James.



Mark Morton:
guitar hero

It's 3am, and Bangalore International Airport is pretty chilly for a mid-summer morning. Maybe it's the weather, maybe it's just the wait, but there aren't too many fans at the airport, Lamb Of God's arrival being kept a closely guarded secret. Given that India has been starved of international metal this year with the flagship rock festival giving in to pop and giving us, er... the fucking Backstreet Boys, we thought many more fans would've lived at the airport for at least the last week, because local euphoria is at an all-time high for metal. Like everywhere else in the world in the world, fans in India just want to hear crushing riffs and bang their heads in time. This isn't without precedent: the last international acts to have played in India were Textures and Amon Amarth last December. Iron Maiden, Megadeth, Machine Head, Sepultura, Satyricon and Enslaved have all graced these shores before this, but Lamb of God will be one of the first American bands in the new wave of heavy metal to hit Indian shores and the faithful are already gearing up. For many new converts, the likes of Lamb Of God and Arch Enemy are their entry point into the genre and this is a rare opportunity for them to see their metal heroes tear up the stage.

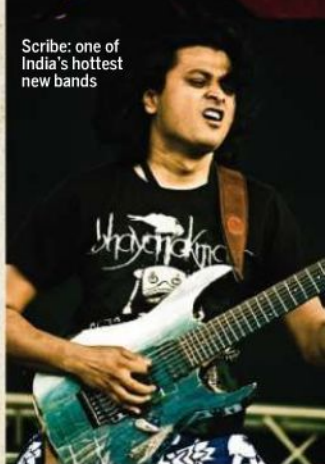
The band's chaperone issues a loud and clear warning to the fans. "No coming in close contact or I shall not be responsible if these guys do anything to you," he says, pointing at the muscle he has brought in to escort the band, perhaps expecting the type of pandemonium not seen since Beatlemania. His announcement wakes up a nearby policeman, happily dozing off on duty. However, his words hardly reach the ears of the fans as frontman Randy Blythe comes into view.

"I need a fucking cigarette," grumbles the nicotine-starved throatist. Guitarist Willie Adler soon follows as do his brother, drummer Chris Adler, and bassist John Campbell. John and Willie approach waiting fans enthusiastically, obliging them with pictures and autographs even though they're probably tired after a long flight. Guitarist Mark Morton appears last out of the terminal and he seems completely bummed out from the travel. Willie suddenly pops the only question we have dreaded – due to religious beliefs, India is a traditionally dry country – as we head to our hotel transportation. "Is there beer in the car?" That's a negative, though we reassure him that their rooms are well stocked with India's best.

Back at the hotel, a fan, who incidentally is the frontman of a band who will open the show for Lamb Of God the following day, has made a caricature of the entire band and presents each member a framed copy. The bandmembers love the caricature and are downing beers like there's no tomorrow. Perhaps it's the jetlag and they're attempting to acclimatise. "This Kingfisher Strong is the shit," John Campbell says to the approval of most of LOG's crew. Everyone has their laptops out and they're busy sending messages to their loved ones when one of the festival organisers proceeds to show John one of India's most famous porn webcomics. John's hooked and is still browsing long after the rest of the band has turned in.



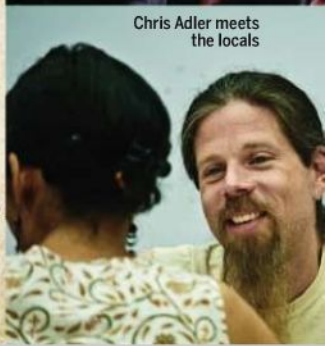
Scribe: one of
India's hottest
new bands



Horns up if you want
more metal in India



Chris Adler meets
the locals

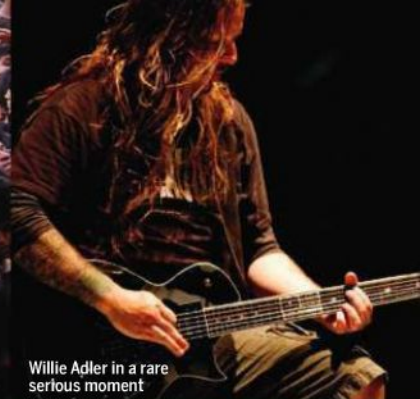




John Campbell and friends



Go on, dive in, the moshpit's lovely



Willie Adler in a rare serious moment

It's early morning of the next day and the heat is unrelenting. The band are busy at a press conference on site at the festival, answering questions fielded by local media.

"We haven't heard of many bands playing here before," Randy admits when asked what they know of the Indian metal scene, "but we're not surprised to be playing here ourselves. It's not Iraq," he says in reference to the increasing number of Western bands visiting the country.

John adds: "We're flattered and humbled to have been invited to India. My wife is extremely happy. She wants to come here for a holiday."

Later, at the main arena, there's a massive throng who've come to catch a glimpse of the band perform their soundcheck. Due to tight security restrictions and safety fears, only lucky competition winners are allowed past security, to the dismay of those left waiting outside. Randy Blythe wakes from a satisfying nap in the green room to the chatter of zealous devotees awaiting an imminent meet and greet. It's chaos as the winners crowd into the room, leading to Mark Morton stepping in himself to create some order.

"Come on, guys, let's do this quickly, eh? We stand in a line, come in, take a pic and – clap-clap – we can go back to the hotel. You're happy, we're happy." That's an understatement. Those who are lucky enough to meet the band are all elated at having just shaken hands with their heroes. "Now I've got something to die for!" quips one metal-starved fan, another noting: "Willie just can't keep a straight face for a photograph, can he? He's always beaming a huge smile or doing something else goofy."

Press and schmooze duties over, the band retire, still jetlagged, to the hotel for more beer and an early night to prepare for their big show.

So how day, and Lamb Of God are still resting up at the hotel when festivities kick off. The Summer Storm lineup features local talent as well as the Virginian headliners, namely Bhoomi who play old-school power metal, progressive metallers Boomerang, hardcore heroes Scribe and technical thrashers Extinct Reflections. The latter's guitarist, Sandesh Nagaraj, has flown in from LA, where he is the Schecter Synyster Gates Scholarship holder at the Musicians' Institute: further proof that the Indian scene is starting to be recognised globally, not forgetting Demonic Resurrection's Global Metal win at this year's *Metal Hammer* Golden God awards. In fact, the idea of inviting purely local bands to open Summer Storm is to expose to the world that good metal music is written and performed even in tradition-bound countries like India. And with the advent of Bangalore becoming a hub of software in Asia, things here are changing fast.

"We could have signed a European act too," states festival organiser Vinay. "However, bands from around here need to be recognised and if we don't give them a chance, no one will." The man has a good point and, as shown on *Hammer's* recent *Global Metal* CD (free with issue 203), the Indian scene has a lot to offer the international scene.

The local acts do not disappoint. The crowd began assembling at 6am, and at around noon the eagerness begins to show when a bunch of fans manage to push away the guards at a gate and rush into the standing area. The 'intruders' are beaten back with bamboo sticks by the Indian security guards. Fans shouting "We can be fucking violent too!" bear the brunt of the security counter-attack. The guards later explain that some of the people who rushed in had no tickets and hence they "had to use force to send them back out".

The outbreak is quelled and half an hour later the gates are open. Bhoomi hit the stage first and begin with raw aggression and power, but are disheartened by a crowd who keep shouting for Lamb Of God, giving the one-finger salute to the band. Sujay the vocalist and Tony the lead guitarist give the crowd a taste of their own medicine, silencing them to a large extent. This behaviour may be surprising to an outsider seeing a youth unified in their hunger for metal, but even so, like everywhere else, there are very few metalheads who are tolerant of all genres in metal itself. Boomerang fare better; impressive since this is their first major gig in Bangalore. The crowd seems to have mellowed and cheers

the band as they finish their set. Scribe from Mumbai are treating this as a release party for their new album, *Mark Of Teja*. It was a risk worth taking; explosive and dominating are not sufficient words to describe this band, who have just returned from Norway after sharing the stage with Marduk and Mayhem at Inferno.

Three bands down and Lamb Of God finally arrive on site. They sneak a peek at the crowd and are amazed at what they see.

"I never thought there would be so many friggin' people, man!" says a visibly shocked Willie as he heads back to the green room. Chris has a smile on his face, as does Randy who's grinning from ear to ear. The band look fresh and energetic and move around freely backstage, interacting with a few members of the bands that played before.

Extinct Reflections take the stage and are greeted by a huge cheer. It's the first time they've played their home crowd in about a year since Sandesh's LA residence and a substantial portion of the crowd is here just to witness ER tear up the place again. The vocalist grew up idolising Randy and is ripping the stage apart with his growls and powerful vocals so this show is a particular trip for him. Randy himself, meanwhile, is checking out the stage structure. He seems stunned by the fact that the entire contraption is held up by logs.

"Are you fucking kidding me? This whole stage is made of wood?" he asks. Upon closer inspection, he discovers that the logs are tied together by rope. "This is friggin' amazing!" he exclaims. He then notices a couple of anthills by the side of the stage. "Do snakes still live in them?" We inform him that they've probably moved out because of the stage and the sound. "Well, I hope they don't get into the crowd. Then we'd have to deal with a snake-pit not a moshpit!"

Randy watches Extinct Reflections from the side of the stage and clicks a few snaps of the crowd and band, which doesn't go unnoticed by fans who immediately begin chanting 'Lamb Of God!' ER's frontman, Prasad Bhat, announces that they will cover a LOG song.

"I don't recognise that one," says a laughing Randy, seeing through Prasad's ruse, unlike many members of the crowd who fail to spot the song as Extinct Reflections' own work.

As the evening draws to a close and the sun begins to set, the temperature is still rising as tempers fray in the crowd awaiting the festival headliners. As fights break out and the crowd grows restless, there's a difference of interests between the band and the organisers, the former wanting to hit the stage early to prevent further clashes, the latter hoping to get more fans through the door. The band eventually win and Chris begins to warm up as we see Willie and Mark all geared up, waiting to go onstage with their axes slung by their sides. A minor problem ensues with crowd control as they sense LOG are about to head onstage, as the people from the back begin to edge forward, putting immense pressure on the fans up front near the barricading. The organisers plead with the fans to have more sense and stop pushing, however the plea is not heard until a couple of the fans pass out in the front as they run out of breathing space.

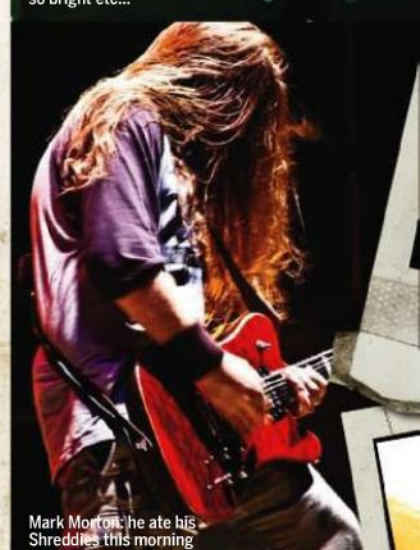
Suddenly it's like the calm before a storm, as *The Passing* is played over the PA. Smoke rises up from the stage which is lit up in blue and we see the band stepping out into view as they belt out *In Your Words*.

"To all of you out here, who don't know who we are... We're Lamb Of God from Richmond mother-fuckin' Virginia," growls Randy, as if they need the introduction. This is *Contractor*, going out to a punk rocker dude who changed the world! Surprisingly, it's Mahatma Gandhi. The crowd is taken a bit aback, but far more laugh. It's clear Randy is loving this, and it's with an obvious sincerity and delight that he declares his contentment at having witnessed such a huge crowd and promises to deliver the message to other bands back home about India being the new metal hotspot; not only for its hunger for international bands, but also the talent that it has to offer the rest of the world. It's thrilling to see, and long may it continue. 🍌

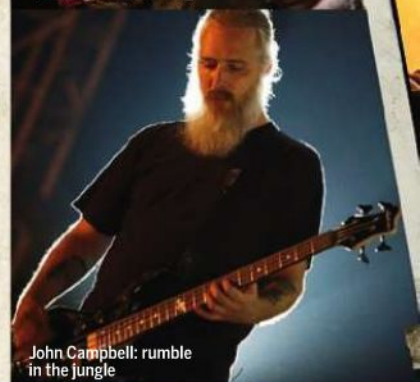
WRATH IS OUT NOW VIA ROADRUNNER RECORDS



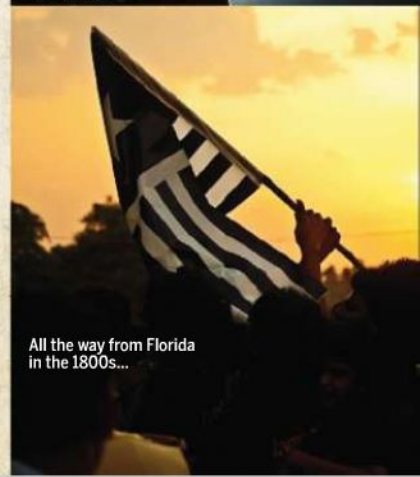
Scribe: their future's so bright etc...



Mark Morton: he ate his Shreddies this morning



John Campbell: rumble in the jungle



All the way from Florida in the 1800s...

"I NEVER THOUGHT
THERE WOULD BE
SO MANY FRIGGIN'
PEOPLE TO SEE
US IN INDIA!"

WILLIE ADLER

Lamb of God
IN INDIA



India shows their appreciation



The sun sets as India hots up

SONIC ATTACK

THE FESTIVAL STATS IN FULL

Number of people who turn up thinking Lamb Of God is a church choir group: **12**

Number of units of alcohol consumed since LOG arrived at Bangalore: **AT LEAST 500**

Number of people who gain entry to the show by bribing a cop: **7**

Number of 'Randy, marry me!!' signs held up by guys with long hair, torn jeans and a heavy metal t-shirt: **3**

Number of guys who think the show is a part of the wedding taking place in the adjacent ground: **4**

Number of people who go home and Wiki to see if Mahatma Gandhi really was a punk rocker: **QUITE A FEW**

Number of times the paramedics are needed even before the gates are opened: **6**

Number of dudes whose parents come to pick them up after the show: **AHEM.... PLENTY**





CLASH OF THE TITANS

Metallica. Slayer. Megadeth. Anthrax. The biggest names in thrash metal ever, sharing a stage for the first time ever, creating the most immense live show... ever.

Words: Joel McIver. Pics: Kevin Nixon.

There is no more metal place to be on Earth than here, today, standing on the runway of a vast airport complex in Poland, with the light of dusk turning everything orange. Megadeth's Dave Mustaine is standing next to us, his copper locks mirroring the sun's dying glow. To a soundtrack of equal parts Slayer and the demented screams of the 81,000 people they're playing for, Megadeth nudges *Hammer*, fixes his gaze on some rather curvaceous PR girls and murmurs, "Y'know, I said some stuff in the past, and I've tried to make amends for it – and here we are, with all the bands that I've had disagreements with. We're all lovey-dovey!" He shakes his head in disbelief and prowls off to chat with the ladies.

Dave isn't the only one who can't believe what's happening. Twelve hours after *Hammer* left the UK and three

after we arrived at the Sonisphere festival in the industrial outskirts of Warsaw, we can't quite get it into our heads that we're witnessing this stupendously important gig. As Scott Ian of Anthrax puts it, "I was sitting at a table with James [Hetfield] and Kirk [Hammett] last night. And James glances over and says: 'Oh look, there's Lars [Ulrich] boring the shit out of Dave.' Lars and Dave are just chatting away to each other. And I said, 'It's kind of weird for me to even see them talking to each other, because the last time I saw that, Dave was still in Metallica!' The energy was insane: we all kept saying to each other, 'Can you believe we're actually doing this?' It's really exciting..."

The scale of this thing is huge. There may only be a handful of dates Sonisphere successfully brought together the Big Four (the UK event at Knebworth features Rammstein and Iron Maiden), but there's a very real sense that history is being made. After all, the Big Four of Thrash, as they were labelled in the late 1980s, have spent the last 20-plus years enduring drugs, deaths, stints in rehab, lineup shuffles and enough spins of the cruel wheel of fashion to finish off lesser acts – and yet they're all here, older and mostly

wiser, but with a renewed hunger that makes this show, their very first together, the only gig to see this year.

The atmosphere at the Polish Sonisphere is electric. Like medieval armies preparing for battle, the bands are staked out in two giant white tents. One of them belongs to Metallica, with a warm-up zone (the 'Tuning Room') attached; the other is shared by Slayer, Megadeth and Anthrax. There's no elitism here, though: all the bandmembers troop freely in and around each other's dressing rooms with only a modicum of security – probably because, unlike a UK or American event, there are very few PRs, fans, managers and other denizens lurking about backstage. Lurking near the free vodka stand, *Hammer* watches as the bands are whisked off in golf carts to the enormous stage, 200 metres away. It's fascinating to see the machinery of a massive show like this one in action.

Poland's very own death metal sensations Behemoth are opening the show, and frontman Nergal is obviously having trouble coming to terms with it. After his band's 30-minute set, he tells us: "What can I say? I'm blown away! We're honoured to be opening this show, especially in Poland. Usually stadium shows are tough for us, because we're not an arena band, but I think our set went really well." Has he met the stars of the show? "Yeah, Lars approached me – he was so friendly!" he nods. Asked if Behemoth received a planet-sized paycheck for their Sonisphere appearance, he says with great diplomacy: "We get a lot of satisfaction, ha ha! We would do it for free. Whatever happens in the future, we'll always be a band who played with Metallica."

Warmed up by Behemoth's monstrous music, the Polish crowd give Anthrax the full welcome, greeting the opening chords of *Caught In A Mosh* with ear-splitting enthusiasm. We're glad to see it, because this isn't any old gig for the New York veterans: it's nothing less than the start of a new era that could make or break them. After two years of chaos in which no one really knew who was singing for them, Anthrax have re-recruited their old frontman Joey Belladonna, who lent



Megadeth's Chris Broderick takes no prisoners



Thrash metal pick'n'mix: Kerry King, Dave Mustaine, Scott Ian and James Hetfield

H N S

Kirk says the Big Four tour was James's idea. Yet another reason to love Lord Hetfield

Anthrax's Rob Caggiano takes some time out, while Hammer's Joel McIver chats to Scott Ian



his expert wails to career-best albums such as *Spreading The Disease* and *Among The Living*. His reappearance seems to have rejuvenated the band, judging by today's set – a quick 45-minute sprint through the highlights of *Among...* and classics like their version of Joe Jackson's *Got The Time*. Thrax also deliver a few bars of *Heaven And Hell* in tribute to the late Ronnie James Dio, a nice touch which gets the crowd roaring with approval – even if the song *Only* gets a small number of fans shouting “John Bush” for a while.

“This is huge for me!” grins Joey backstage, who reveals that he spent two hours in the crowd before the set, meeting fans. Guitarist Scott Ian adds: “John Bush decided that he didn’t want to be in the band – any band. He decided that this life is just not for him any more. Knowing that the Big Four shows were coming, it seemed to make sense that Joey did them, because it’s the lineup of the band that *should* be doing these shows. John just wasn’t able to commit to doing this full-time, which kinda made up



Tom Araya of Slayer in fighting form

“IN 1988 THIS SHOW NEVER
WOULD HAVE HAPPENED.
IN 1998 NO ONE GAVE A FUCK”

KIRK HAMMETT, METALLICA

THE BIG FOUR



Anthrax's Scott Ian makes sure the crowd gets Caught In A Mosh

our minds for us: we were like, 'OK, let's see if Joey wants to do this'. We flew him down to New York and hung out for two days, and it definitely felt good."

Scott explains that the Sonisphere gigs represent a whole new chapter for Anthrax. "After last summer, when Dan Nelson walked, it really threw us into a downward spiral as a band: we'd never cancelled a tour before, for any reason. Nothing like that had happened in the history of this band. We were lucky enough that John came back and did the Knebworth Sonisphere and some gigs in Japan and Australia. I'd love to think that it was all meant to happen for a reason, and that Joey is back in the band to stay, and we're gonna make a record and continue with this lineup. That's what we all want to happen." Fingers crossed...

Chilling backstage, Dave Mustaine is ready for his set. Megadeth are on fire at the moment, as anyone who saw them at Download can testify, and the popularity of their 2009 album *Endgame* – Dave's most aggressive and technical in years – says much about the public's affection for thrash metal in 2010. Boosted by the re-recruitment of bassist David Ellefson, Megadeth are close to the peak of their powers – although Dave knows that he's screwed up, and screwed up badly, in the past. Chatting candidly to *Hammer*, he shrugs: "This is historic for plenty of reasons. There are so many happy people standing out there in the audience. There might be others who are saying, 'Fuck you Dave, I hate you'. But at the end of the concert it's like, 'You know what? I had a good time. I'm



Dave Mustaine: a mane attraction



Kirk Hammett adds Fuel to the fire

not even the slightest bit concerned about the people who don't like me. I'm concerned about the people that do!"

Asked if he'd been uneasy opening for Slayer, a band of roughly equal stature to Megadeth, Dave explains: "No – I think that's because Slayer have been together for considerably longer, with less lineup changes." He adds, "This is really neat for me, because I'm the only one that's been in two of the bands. Last night we were having dinner and Lars and I sat at the same table and we were shooting the shit all night. James and I are friends. So many missing people are Metallica fans, and they're out on Megadeth because they think we don't get along. Megadeth make good music, so I really think they should give us a fair shot."

Judging by the Polish crowd's reaction, a lot of people are willing to do just that, with their appreciation for new 'Deth songs such as *Head Crusher* just as great as for classics like *Symphony Of Destruction*. Backstage, Kerry King of Slayer is listening to Megadeth's set while talking to *Hammer*, telling us: "I think Megadeth had a fuckin' great last record – those are great riffs! Metallica's making heavy fuckin' music too. Now is a good time for this tour."

Kerry, who Kirk Hammett later describes to us as "so fuckin' metal", did what he does best on arrival in Poland the previous night, arriving at the dinner organised by Metallica in party mood. "It felt pretty historic to me yesterday," he informs us. "It was awesome. I was sitting at the table with Shawn Drover from Megadeth and I looked up and said, 'Dude, there's a lot of famous fuckin' people here! The first guy I saw was Ellefson, then I was hanging out with Kirk and Scott, and then I had Shawn and Chris [Broderick] from Megadeth with me for most of the night – and then me and Kirk started doing shots, and it escalated from there. It was a fuckin' blast!"

If anyone could realistically outplay the headliners tonight, you'd have to nominate Slayer, whose hour-long set

is mesmerising. "I put together a brutal set," promises Kerry beforehand, and indeed the LA quartet's warp-speed dash through the classics (*Angel Of Death*, *Chemical Warfare* and the apocalyptic set-closer *Raining Blood*) and new material (*Jihad*, *World Painted Blood*) is worth coming a long way to see. Slayer epitomise metal, right down to their old-school musical preferences: as Kerry tells us, "I saw a poster in town saying that Venom's playing here soon – and I was like, 'Fuck! Why couldn't they play on this thing?'"

And so to Metallica, the biggest heavy metal band there has ever been or, indeed, there is ever likely to be. The four support acts have done their stuff and retired to their tour buses, as the long drive to the next Sonisphere in Switzerland prevents much backstage debauchery. The scene is set, the sun has gone down, and oh God, is that the beginning of *The Ecstasy Of Gold*? With 81,000 people bellowing the M-word, we slam our vodka and run to the front of the stage...

"You know something?" Kirk Hammett told *Hammer* earlier that afternoon. "In 1988 this show never would have happened, for whatever reason. In 1998 no one gave a fuck, and now in 2010 it's big fuckin' news. God fuckin' bless it! It was initially James's idea. He just wondered one day how great it would be if the Big Four toured together, and we all kinda scratched our heads in agreement and were all like, 'Yeah, that would be very, very cool.'"



"SLAYERRRRGGHHHHH!" to the power of 81,000

OH YES THEY WILL... OH NO THEY WON'T! THE ROCKY ROAD TO THE BIG FOUR SHOWS.

SEPTEMBER 3, 2009

Kerry King tells *Hammer*'s bespectacled web monkey Terry Bezer that a Big Four tour might happen. Metalheads of the world get an instant boner/wide-on in excitement.

SEPTEMBER 15, 2009

Lars Ulrich is all vague about it, saying, "I think it would be a super-fun thing to do... But right now it's not something that's like hush-hush being worked

on behind the scenes, or anything like that." The metalheads' boners reduce to semis.

SEPTEMBER 16, 2009

Robert Trujillo declares: "Nothing's concrete. It's not a sealed deal. We're working on it... We've had a few different conversations on the subject. I'm friends with Kerry King and had dinner with him a few months back, and it came up there." We get 'upstanding' again.

OCTOBER 16, 2009

Kirk Hammett says, "That tour is not gonna happen... We've all been hearing that for a while. I get asked [about] it regularly. As far as a tour going on, it's not gonna happen. Conflicting schedules, conflicting personalities, [a lot of] conflicting things. It's a good idea, though. And personally, I can see the significance of playing a tour like that, but... it's not gonna happen." We 'lose wood' completely.

DECEMBER 14, 2009

Out of the blue, Metallica break the news that Big Four dates are on their way: "You've been posting and chatting about it for months, and we're here now to confirm it... Metallica, Slayer, Megadeth and Anthrax will all share the same stage for the first time EVER!" As Lars summarised: "Thrash metal's Big Four... what a mindfuck! Bring it on!" Zips pop worldwide...



The most awesome left to right in the history of left to right: Dave Lombardo, Rob Trujillo, Jeff Hanneman, Tom Araya, Charlie Benante, Joey Belladonna, Dave Mustaine, David Ellefson, Chris Broderick, Scott Ian, Rob Caggiano, Kerry King, James Hetfield, Shawn Drover, Frank Bello, Lars Ulrich, Kirk Hammett

Talking about the previous night's get-together, Kirk says: "It was at an Italian restaurant here in Warsaw, and everyone was hanging out until one or two in the morning. We were all very happy to be here: the main topic was how great it was that we were able to pull this off, and how great it was to be still standing 25 years after the fact. We were just bouncing around and catching up. It was just the bands – no girlfriends or managers. It was hilarious, because it could easily have been 1985: we have a lot less hair but a lot more experience!"

The question we had to ask – about whether the bad blood that has existed between some of the musicians for decades is still causing resentment – didn't take Kirk by surprise. "I'm a man of integrity and sincerity, and I believe in karma," he told us, "and I don't let anything like that bother me. There are more important things in life, and I don't let myself get all riled up about who said whatever. I have a pretty good concept of myself, so I never let any of that shit fuckin' bother me at all. You'll never see me replying to any bullshit, I've never bothered. I don't have time for any of that fuckin' crap. We all collectively know that that was the past, and this is now, and what is happening is what is happening. This is the show to see for metal fans."



Kerry King oozes metal in any setting

This view seems to be shared by the vast audience tonight: when the unmistakable opening chords of *Creeping Death* hit the crowd, accompanied by 20-foot pyro eruptions, the idea of being anywhere else at this precise moment is unthinkable. The 15 songs in the main set come from the earliest days of thrash metal – *The Four Horsemen* and *Master Of Puppets* among them – via Metallica's MTV-dominating early 90s (*Sad But True* sounds vast), but the band skip lightly over the *Load*, *Reload* and *St Anger* era, with only *Fuel* representing those "sideways journeys"



Joey Belladonna: thrilled to be back in the 'Thrax

"I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO'S BEEN IN TWO OF THE BANDS! IT'S NEAT!"

DAVE MUSTAINE, MEGADETH

as Kirk refers to them in our interview. Three *Death Magnetic* songs bring the set up to date, but the encores seal the deal: Metallica's 1990 cover of Queen's *Stone Cold Crazy*, followed by their first ever song, *Hit The Lights*, and the quintessential thrash anthem, *Seek And Destroy*. It's a breathtaking spectacle.

And maybe, just maybe, you'll be seeing it too. You're reading it here first: if this run is a success (and why wouldn't it be?), the Big Four shows may take place in other countries. Kirk tells us, "If this works out, and everyone has the time, there's no reason why we can't do this again in the future. This is basically the trial run." Kerry King adds, "I'm hoping this grows some big fuckin' legs and gets to Western Europe, the UK and the rest of the world. I told James last night, 'Dude, I think this is going to be such a big thing – hopefully we can take it everywhere... If it all works out, I can't imagine why it wouldn't go everywhere else.'"

An interesting thing happens at the end of Metallica's set. After the final encore, the band are throwing drumsticks and guitar picks into the crowd when some moron in the control booth sends a recorded message through the PA system. As a giant, disembodied voice talks to the crowd in Polish, James Hetfield barks into his microphone, "Shut the fuck up! We ain't finished yet!" The stadium erupts in applause.

He's right, too. Metallica aren't finished yet. Thrash metal is alive and well, and your life is better because of it. 🤘

SONISPHERE UK TAKES PLACE AT KNEBWORTH ON JULY 30-AUGUST 1



Metal Mecca

B-O-A

BLOODSTOCK BEGAN LIFE AS A HUMBLE CLUB SHOW IN DERBY. OVER THE

BLOOD



Max Cavalera with Soulfly in 2008

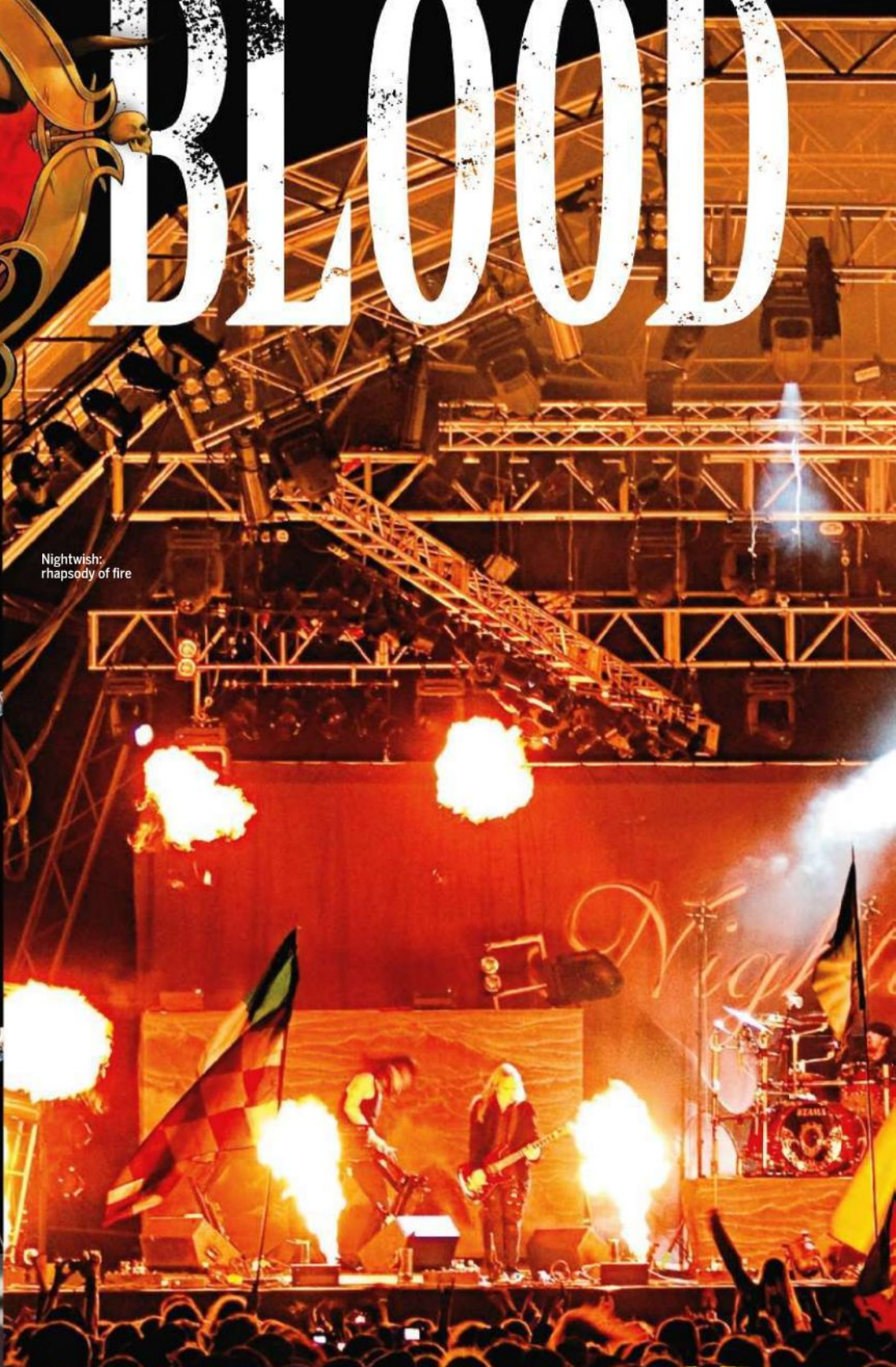


Children Of Bodom's wild child Alexi Laiho



Turisas's Warlord Nygård

Nightwish:
rhapsody of fire



"AT THE FIRST EVENT, THE STAGE LEANED TO ONE SIDE AND THE BACKDROP BLEW OFF! YOU LEARN AS YOU GO ALONG WHEN YOU'RE NOT BACKED BY A HUGE CORPORATE COMPANY"

VICKY GREGORY

LAST DECADE IT HAS GROWN EXPONENTIALLY INTO THE UK'S PREMIERE TRUE HEAVY METAL FESTIVAL.

BROTHERS

Words: Dom Lawson.

Travel back in time to the UK of the late 90s and you may not like what you see. Despite the unerring support of fans worldwide, heavy music was in the midst of a grim commercial downturn and, in stark contrast to the festival-strewn summer bonanza of today, British metalheads had precious few events to look forward to over the summer months. Even Donington, the home of the rightly revered Monsters Of Rock festivals during the 80s and early 90s, was somewhat dormant and, as a result, casual observers could have been forgiven for thinking that the UK metal scene was in a rather sorry state.

But then, miraculously and from nowhere, there was Bloodstock. The brainchild of artist Paul Gregory and his good friend Vince Brotheridge, Bloodstock began as a simple scheme to start a low-key heavy metal festival in Derby. Best known for creating album covers for Saxon, including the legendary *Crusader* artwork, Paul had a few close links with the metal scene and the courage to get the ball rolling by asking Saxon's Biff Byford if he would be willing to bring his band along to headline the inaugural show. Thankfully, Biff agreed, and Bloodstock opened its doors for the first time at Derby Assembly Rooms on May 28, 2001, with Saxon headlining alongside Glenn Hughes, Blaze Bayley, Skyclad and Orange Goblin.

"Paul asked Biff for a favour and that was it!" explains Vicky Gregory, daughter of Paul and now one of Bloodstock's chief organisers. "Then we got various other bands that weren't huge, obviously, because we had very little money to work with back then, but the first event brought in 700 people which wasn't bad for a little indoor event. Derby seemed the right place to have the festival because it's right in the middle of the country, and so we decided to keep it Derby-based. It's an easy place for everyone to get to."

The plan behind Bloodstock was a simple one: put some great heavy metal bands on the stage and the fans will turn up, drink beer, bang their heads and have a fucking brilliant time. Although the whole

enterprise was a leap into the unknown, it was founded on the simple notion that the metal scene is happily independent from the rest of the music world and needs to do things its own way.

"It's always been about putting on a festival and making it a pure metal event with the kind of bands that you wouldn't normally see in the UK," says Vicky. "The kind of bands you'd have to travel to Wacken or one of the other European festivals to see, they're suddenly on your doorstep. That's what we believe in – and we're not alone!"

Defying the cynics, Bloodstock was clearly satisfying a great need among metal fans in the UK, catering to an audience that had long been ignored by mainstream festivals and that was crying out to have an event of its own, somewhat akin to the many big metal festivals in Europe that had been operating successfully for years. In 2002, the event was headlined by Blind Guardian, a band who had a substantial following in the UK but who were so far from the mainstream radar that no other festival would have ever dared to book them at all. Similarly, in 2003, Bloodstock brought Finland's Nightwish to the UK. Massively popular throughout Europe, the band were always destined to make inroads into the UK market, but it was the patronage of Bloodstock and its loyal and passionate punters that would help to cement their relationship with British fans.

"Nightwish had never played in the UK before, and we sold the entire venue out!" states Vicky. "Meanwhile, we had another band that said to us, 'We're an unknown band but we'll play for nothing!' At the time we said, 'That's fine, because we can't afford to pay you!' and they said that they just needed the exposure. That band was Dragonforce! They're charging extortionate fees now, but we had them first! Ha ha!"

The arrival of Nightwish at Bloodstock – which became a two-day event for the first time that same year – was a huge turning point for the festival. Not only did it clearly indicate to the metal scene and the music industry in general that this event was able to entice hugely successful European acts onto a British stage, but it also ensured that Bloodstock would become sufficiently popular to the point it was becoming increasingly difficult to hold the event at Derby Assembly Rooms, where punter capacity was strictly limited. 2004's indoor event was another huge triumph, with

Angela Gossow:
the enemy within

BLOODSTOCK FESTIVAL

Within Temptation:
basque in black



Dani made it a Filthy
festival last year



Hammerfall:
hammering it home



Deathstars:
let loose
in Derby



Amon Amarth:
Viking warriors

"PEOPLE REFER TO IT AS 'OUR FESTIVAL' AND THAT'S BRILLIANT. THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT WE WANT PEOPLE TO FEEL"

VICKY GREGORY

Gamma Ray, Children Of Bodom and Sonata Arctica helping to sell the show out with ease, but the inevitable occurred the following year, when the festival's organisers bit the bullet and made the tricky but worthwhile move into the great outdoors.

In the summer of 2005, Bloodstock Open Air was born, despite one or two little teething problems...

"At the first open air event, the stage leaned to one side and the backdrop blew off!" laughs Vicky. "All these things happened because we'd never done it before! When you're not backed by a huge corporate company, you don't really know how to put a big festival on and so we were learning as we went along. We didn't have anyone telling us how it should be done, but we did have some good friends at Wacken. They were brilliantly helpful. To be fair, they've got a pretty successful festival going on over there, haven't they? They have the same independent ethos that we do, so it made a lot of sense."

Initially existing alongside the indoor event – which in 2005 was headlined by Hammerfall and Within Temptation, and by Primal Fear and My Dying Bride the following year – Bloodstock Open Air has become the biggest and most important event of the summer for diehard metalheads in the UK and has grown to such an extent that the organisers have been forced to abandon their shows at Derby Assembly Rooms for the time being, in order to concentrate fully on their outdoor exploits.

Although Download and now Sonisphere have the commercial clout to attract huge mainstream headliners and the vast

audience to match, Bloodstock continues to scratch an itch that would otherwise have been driving the UK scene insane. Going from strength to strength in recent years, the festival became a three-day affair in 2007, expanded yet further with a third stage in 2008 and 2009, and is now an almost guaranteed complete sell-out from the minute that tickets go on sale. With everyone from Saxon, Blind Guardian and Nightwish to Opeth, Carcass and Cradle Of Filth topping the bill over the years, it is also a much more diverse and substantial event than its none-more-metal image might suggest, and its supporters are considerably more open-minded than even they might like to admit.

"A lot of performances have hit the core of what Bloodstock is all about and sometimes people are surprised by that," says Vicky Gregory. "We've had so many great moments over the years. Europe last year were incredible. You should've seen the amount of abuse we got when we booked them, but the reception they got was incredible! I've never been so nervous about a band hitting the stage, but it went completely the other way. It was such a positive audience response. People went away saying, 'We're sorry, we were wrong!'"

So what about this year? Bloodstock 2010 looks certain to be the most successful festival yet for Vicky and her family, with the most diverse bill to date and a number of spectacular big names promising to make it a weekend to remember forever.

"Personally, I'm really looking forward to seeing Devin Townsend," Vicky states. "I'm looking forward to Meshuggah too, and I know that Twisted Sister will put on a really

great headlining performance. Ross The Boss and Scott Columbus will be great too, and I think they'll put on a pleasing set for the Manowar diehards! In terms of new talent, we've got Powerwolf, who are absolutely excellent. They've never played in the UK before and I'm sure everyone's going to love them!"

Bloodstock is thoroughly independent and proudly "family-run" – since the amicable departure of Vince Brotheridge from the organisation team, Paul and Vicky Gregory have worked alongside Vicky's sister Rachael and her two brothers Jason and Adam, with various other close friends pitching in to make sure everything runs smoothly. It's a classic grassroots success story, wherein passionate fans of music boldly started a festival for likeminded people and spent a decade watching it grow, without the assistance of some powerful corporate backer. If you need proof of this humble festival's importance, look at how many other similar events of all shapes and sizes have sprung up in the UK over the last few years. Bloodstock, we salute you!

"We're very proud of what we've achieved and we're still learning!" she states. "It's a family-run event and everyone's part of the Bloodstock family, so you get a feeling at the festival that you won't get at any other event. We have *character*. It's all grown organically and naturally and the people have grown with it. People refer to it as 'our festival' and that's brilliant. That's exactly what we want people to feel."

THE 10TH ANNUAL BLOODSTOCK FESTIVAL TAKES PLACE AT DERBY CATTON HALL FROM AUGUST 13-15



WINDS OF CHANGE

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAST 10 YEARS OF BLOODSTOCK



Glenn Hughes / Blaze Bayley / Primal Fear
Skyclad / Orange Goblin



Gamma Ray / Threshold / Freedom Call
Bal-Sagoth / Biomechanical



Saxon / Paradise Lost / Blaze Bayley
Edguy / Dragonforce



Children Of Bodom / Sonata Arctica
Threshold / Primal Fear / Evergrey



Hammerfall / Amon Amarth / After Forever
Cathedral / Metalium



Sebastian Bach / Mostly Autumn
Paradise Lost / Edguy / Masterplan



Primal Fear / Deathstars / Brainstorm
Axel Rudi Pell / Onslaught



In Flames / Lacuna Coil / Nevermore
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WHITECHAPEL

DEATH IV

WHITECHAPEL are bringing a new kind of heavy to the masses. Like all the best horror films, they have one foot in blood-drenched fantasy, the other in tangible reality. Be very afraid...

Words: Toby Cook.

There are few instances that spark more outrage within a band's fanbase than when that band is perceived to be selling out; nothing, and we do mean nothing, disappoints anyone more than when our beloved underground heroes appear to compromise their integrity, their morals and, dammit, their principals in a desperate lunge for mainstream acceptance. Of course sometimes this is down to very calculated manoeuvres on behalf of the band, their management and/or their record company.

Sometimes though, it just so happens that the band in question is so fucking storming that no matter how much we might want them to keep playing in subterranean sweat boxes, they're too good for it. Years ago James Hetfield remarked after Metallica premiered their first video – for *One* – that fans had accused them of selling out because Metallica were no longer “their little band that they could fit in their pocket”. Are Metallica successful? Yes. Have they sold out? Maybe, once or twice. Are they metal as fuck? Damn fucking straight!

Imagine, then, being in a band whose third LP reaches number 43 on the American Billboard 200. You'd be stoked, right? Because that's exactly what's happened to Knoxville, Tennessee deathcore mob, Whitechapel. And do they fear accusations of committing the ultimate sin?

“Yeah, that definitely crossed our minds, especially with the crowd that we started out with and where we came from,” explains vocalist Phil Bozeman. “There have been people that have said, ‘Oh man, you guys are doing all this crap, you're doing big tours and selling out!’ But we try to look past it; people can make those comments if they like, we don't take it personally.”

“When you actually hear the record you know within the first 30 seconds that we haven't sold out or even made an effort to sell out,” adds guitarist Ben Savage. “You can very obviously spot the bands who are out there to make a fast buck, but we just make the music we want and I guess we've done it pretty damn well.”

“If anything, we are very proud, and very surprised – especially at reaching 43 in the top 200, that's something we never imagined in a million years,” contemplates Phil. “It's fucking great. It shows that we're entering the new era of metal; it shows that heavy, abrasive music is becoming acceptable.”

And there, perhaps, is the greatest irony. If you like a band, you want to buy their records, you want your friends to buy their records, and if enough people buy their records and come to their shows they're going to become successful. To then accuse them of selling out is moronic!

But, you've got to be good to start with, you've got to have – to use record company speak – that *unit-shifting potential*. So why, we hear you sneer, are Whitechapel so great? Well, it's probably down to their remarkable ability to seamlessly melt the traditions and conventions of European metal acts with the visceral, blood-spitting anarchy of the US hardcore scene. But we're getting ahead of ourselves. Let's take it back a bit; Whitechapel weren't some sort of immaculate metal conception now, were they?

“We basically just started writing music in a basement with one of our friends [Brandon Cagle, an original bandmember] who I've been friends with for years,” recounts Phil. “Then after a little while we got in contact with Alex

[Wade, guitar], Gabe [Crisp, bass] and our original drummer Derek [Martin], and we just started jamming from there. Then in 2007, Zack [Householder, guitar] and Kevin [Lane, drums] came in... and here we are!”

Stateside chart success aside, we can confirm that they are indeed a damn fine group. That number 43 album, *A New Era Of Corruption*, their second for current label Metal Blade, is a sonic assault comparable only to having one of the weird bug things from *Star Trek II*, covered in glass splinters, hammered into your ear canal until it explodes somewhere behind your corneas. With a trifector of guitars allowing the group to perform the strangely harmonic, yet volatile grooves that most death metal acts would kill for, surrounded by the snarling ferocity of their unmistakable hardcore edge, might this just be the future of metal?

“Yeah, why not!” exclaims Ben. “I mean, that's what we're trying to do! But seriously, I don't know. I see a lot of bands that try to pull it off and they don't seem to do as good a job as we do; we just try to make everything really organic and flowing, to make it a sound we can call our own.”

The problem for Whitechapel though is that, of the entire metal family, they probably couldn't have picked two more disparate subcultures to attempt to appeal to. Death metal traditionally covets technical virtuosity, escapist, slightly surreal lyrical content and more often than not a carefully constructed over-the-top image of death and gore. Hardcore, on the other hand, tends to be more firmly rooted in real life; angry young men, raging at the system with violently direct words and no superfluous musical endeavours. It's like trying to force someone to eat snails with a side of Marmite.

“Yeah, for a time it was pretty difficult to get a crowd,” laments Ben. “Certainly in the beginning it was mainly the more death metal guys that didn't take too fondly to us – especially in the US where the hardcore guys and the death metal guys really don't mix well together. But as we've kept going and sold more records, it's seemed that we're finally starting to get more metal kids at the shows – the metal kids are almost overwhelming the hardcore kids now, in fact. But we don't really want to appeal solely to one demographic; we want to appeal to everybody, that was one of the main things we said when we were

MAGNETIC



Whitechapel (left to right): Alex Wade, Ben Savage, Phil Bozeman, Zach Householder, Gabe Crisp, Kevin Lane

**"WE'RE ENTERING
THE NEW ERA OF
METAL. IT SHOWS
THAT HEAVY,
ABRASIVE MUSIC
IS BECOMING
ACCEPTABLE"**

PHIL BOZEMAN



Whitechapel:
...but black threads

starting the band - we wanted to appeal to hardcore guys, death metal guys, the whole metal spectrum. Obviously there'll be people who don't like us because they're not fans of metal, but we try to appeal to just 'fans of metal' in general."

This may come as a surprise to those who are just discovering Whitechapel - a band whose very name is a direct reference to the area of London made infamous by the Jack The Ripper murders in the late 1800s, and whose lyrics deal with everything from serial killers and personal tragedy, to flights of fancy and imagination. Surely these are things more commonly associated with the death metal crowd?

"Perhaps they are," Phil explains. "But I honestly had a rough childhood. I grew up in a very middle class family, but then my father passed away from a very rare disease when I was 10 years old. That was pretty hard on me, I didn't start going crazy or anything, but that was pretty much the point that I started branching out and started listening to heavy metal. Then my mother passed away when I was 15, and that was really hard on me too; but that's not necessarily where all my lyrics come from. I guess it just gives me more of a broader horizon to reach out to and express emotions and stuff like that."

"But because I listen to death metal a lot, too, I was really influenced by the crazy lyrical content that some of those bands have. Like Cannibal Corpse - they really pioneered that whole angle, the killing of women and the really gory lyrics... that's where a lot of it comes from, just having grown up on a diet of metal, and having experienced some of the things that I have in my childhood. I use that as a grounding point and often just try to branch out from there. I try to let my imagination just take me places that are weird and crazy. That's what it's about really, writing lyrics, it's about just using your imagination, and mixing stuff that's real and stuff that's not real... it's a chance to just escape reality!"

So, back to this chart success then. What we've learnt so far is that whatever Whitechapel are - be they a death metal band with hardcore fans, or a hardcore band not afraid to show off their technical prowess and escapist themes - they're slowly gathering speed and acquiring greater and greater numbers in their fanbase. Perhaps then, the worry for their fans is that soon the band will realise their relative success and become complacent. So have they?

"MY DAD PASSED AWAY WHEN I WAS 10, MY MOTHER WHEN I WAS 15. THAT WAS HARD ON ME" PHIL BOZEMAN

"Honestly, we really haven't had much time to sit back and look at [our chart position]," says Ben. "Before we heard the number we were out on tour - like, constantly, so we never got to really see the benefits. But when you actually see that number, 43, it's like 6,300 copies in the first week, and you're just like, 'Whoa! We're actually doing it, we're actually making a dent in the music scene!' Or more like a car crash in the music scene!"

So auto-tune for the next LP then, Ben?

"Ha ha! Yeah, we're going to get Kanye West in to produce, get a bit more futuristic and go for number one on the Billboard chart!"

All jokes aside, Ben's answer ultimately belies what may really be the secret of Whitechapel's success: a solid commitment to touring, and to their fanbase. Over the last few years they have continued to tour when Phil has been struck down with a mystery illness that caused him to pass out repeatedly.

"I was a fucking mess," he tells us. "It was one of the worst episodes of illness that I've ever had in my life... I walked in the door and literally just passed straight out. Then I got up again - just about, I don't really remember it - and then passed out again! So the guys just laid me on the couch and that was it."

Then there was the time when whole families of illegal immigrants stowed away in their van, as Ben recalls.

"We were crossing over to the UK and right before we got to Calais to cross the Channel we stopped at a gas station. As our bus driver opened the trailer, this whole family of gypsies ran out! They were trying to cross illegally into England or something, but there were even babies, people jumping out with kids held in their arms! I think there was, like, eight people in total!"

"But you've got to remember why it is that you're doing it all; you have to just accept it and remember that you're lucky to be able to do it. Not too many people get to do this, y'know."

A NEW ERA OF CORRUPTION IS OUT NOW VIA METAL BLADE RECORDS

CHURCH OF NOISE

WHAT MAKES UP THE WHITECHAPEL SOUND?

PANTERA

10% You hear that tighter-than-a-nun's-clicky bass drum sound that pulverises your eardrums over and over again like a suspended punching bag? Vinnie Paul revolutionised that shit in the early 90s and it's still at the forefront of contemporary metal.

SUFFOCATION

30% Any band plying their trade in deathcore owes a massive debt of gratitude to these New York noise masochists who were at the forefront of bands who fused eyeball-melting brutality of death metal and punishing beatdowns.

CANNIBAL CORPSE

25% In their 22-year history, Cannibal Corpse have never been so influential. The New York death metal pioneers' past has had an immeasurable influence on the current brutality brigade and they continue to show their contemporaries the way forward when it comes to crushing skulls.

JOB FOR A COWBOY

20% Are you in a modern death metal band? Do people show up to your shows, buy your merch and rep your ends in all corners of the globe? Then you owe JFAC a hearty doff of your cap for modernising death metal and bringing it to the attention of the world in a big way.

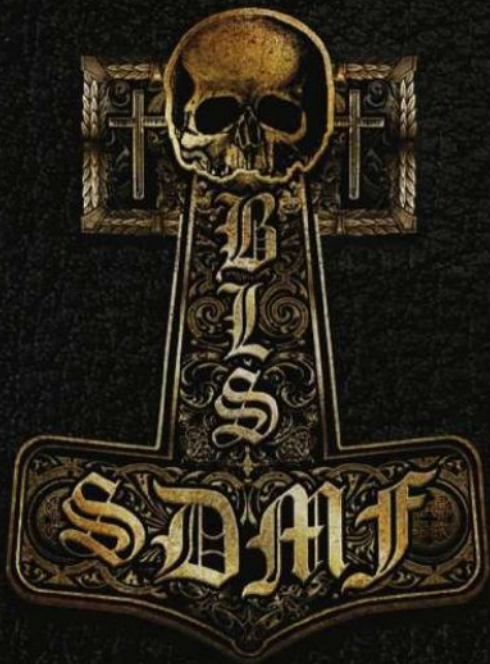
EARTH CRISIS

15% Beatdowns have always been Earth Crisis's business and business has always been good, but when a slight death metal tinge began creeping into their punishing fist-throwing brand of metallic hardcore, plenty of this current crop of deathcore maniacs were taking notes.



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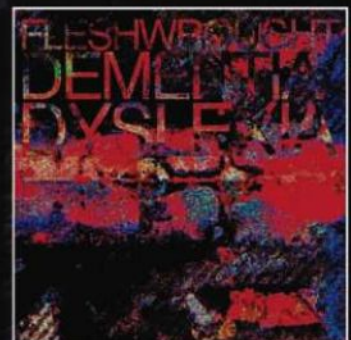
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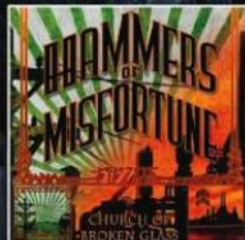
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SOUL OF A NEW MACHINE



Devil Sold His Soul (left to right):
Leks Wood, Jonny Renshaw,
Ed Gibbs, Paul Kitney, Iain
Trotter, Rick Chapple

DEVIL SOLD HIS SOUL are the UK's mightiest progressive beatdown crew, and they are back with an album to smash all expectations.

Words: Gill.

Devil Sold His Soul have emerged from their figurative Dagobah (well, off the M4 anyway), only their Yoda was themselves. The young, progressive, post-hardcore six-piece locked themselves away to hone and perfect their training as one of the UK's most exciting and consummately forward-thinking heavy bands. But will the band follow in the great British tradition of amazing bands who are appreciated all too late? Johnny Truant, Earthtone9, Beecher, Sikth, Stampin' Ground, One Minute Silence... the list goes on. The London-based sextet's brand new album, *Blessed & Cursed*, only their second, shows the kind of precocious progress of the innately gifted and the consciously hard-working. And with an epic and intense Download Festival performance earlier this year, the band are ready to step up... Obi Wan would be proud. He loved progressive hardcore...

"*Blessed...* is a much bigger and more diverse album than the last," explains 24-year-old frontman Ed Gibbs. "We just took our best aspects and tried to better them. I definitely tried to make my vocal parts more interesting, make my voice as varied as possible and convey as much real meaning as possible. We did the same with the music, trying to push the heavy elements to make them heavier and really work on our melodic side as well. I think we've managed to inject variety while still making it work as a whole."

The 10 songs form an hour of glorious contradictory sonics and dark evocative themes: it's dense yet spacious, bleak yet uplifting, heavy yet delicate, noisy yet beautiful and frenetic yet ordered.

"Our sound definitely contradicts itself a lot," he smiles. "While we don't consciously think about it, we are aware of not being too bleak or too optimistic, but when we go in one direction we do tend to go all out for it. Intensity in the mood, whatever the mood is."

With post-hardcore as a starting point, the band have pushed the walls of their sound with *Blessed & Cursed* – and most notably included vocal lines that, while clean, still evoke a haunting and ominous ambience within the soundscape.

"It's hard to get an objective view on how good or not what you're creating is while you're doing it because you're so wrapped up in the

The aggression and rawness of both instruments and voice are in evidence immediately, but so are the ethereal clean vocals. Do you think the clean vocals will alienate the 'dats not metulz' crew?

"Yes and no," says Ed as he thinks. "We sit in a weird niche. The fans that we've built up over the last six years will all be open to it, but there will be people who say, 'Oh that's not heavy enough for me' or 'That guy's screaming too much' or 'That's not melodic enough for me', but we have to expect that sounding the way we do."

And what of the dwindling attention span of music fans? Bands seem to have a shorter and shorter period of time to grow and gestate. If you can't release your *Black Album* as your debut you're fucked. Leaving only the old guard with seminal back catalogues (Iron Maiden, Metallica) or the odd survivors who manage to struggle through a decade of relative obscurity before finally reaching the finishing line (Amon Amarth, Lamb Of God).

"That's always a problem," he says. "But I think we've been around long enough to have paid our dues and people will still pay attention. I like to think that if a band's good enough people will listen to them no matter how old they are. I can't promise that people will think we're good enough for that, but hopefully people will at least listen and not just write off bands because they're old or new."

Individuality is a blessing and a curse. Just like at school, the 'alternative' kid is bullied until sixth form – when suddenly minds are ajar (s)he's a hero. Just ask Muse, Black Sabbath or even Metallica what it's like to try something new only to be written off as a novelty wildcard. Ed admits that all the members of the band are teetering on the edge of having to get "proper jobs" but that the feeling of creating something great has spurred them on and kept the faith alive. After all, no one ever became great living in someone else's shadow...

"We are doing something a little bit different, and it's both good and awful for us," says Ed. "It's really hard to get on big tours and festival bills because we don't really fit in any one category. We might not be enough of one thing for some people and too much for others. That's why we've never had any major tour supports."

"MOST BANDS WANT TO BE SUPER-TECHNICAL OR GO FOR THE POP ANGLE, WITH NO IN-BETWEEN. NOT US"

ED GIBBS

process. We all thought we were writing something a lot better than we had done in the past and that's why we stuck at it."

So to what do we owe this prodigious creative leap?

"We haven't drawn inspiration from any new or old bands that we hadn't before," he ponders. "There's so much bad heavy music at the moment, so we don't listen to much new heavy music. Apart from the odd thing like the new Converge record. We also listen to a lot of pop stuff. I love Paramore, it's just fun, it puts you in a good mood. Although that Converge record puts me in a good mood too, ha ha! We never really know what to expect because we just try to get on and write stuff that's better than stuff we've written in the past. What's the point in making music that's not as good or worse than music you've written before?"

It's always interesting to learn where the most inventive bands get their inspiration from. While some seem to self-influence and end up chasing their tails, others find themselves in uncharted territory. Slayer's Dave Lombardo is currently working on a live drum'n'bass project called Philm, Tommy Lee has his rap/electro side project and Periphery draw inspiration from obscure leftfield electronica.

"We're more inspired by films and the music in films: the way music builds, how massive the sounds can be with orchestras and how emotional they can make it."

Trendy scene bands are born 10 a day and seem to auto-inflate with a plug-in insta-crowd who are waiting for the next facsimile of their preferred sub-sub-sub-genre leader. They also wither perennially, leaving only the best and – invariably – most distinctive acts to continue. And Devil Sold His Soul stand shoulder to shoulder with peers like Underoath and Architects. It's a long old slog being different, but it pays off in the end. And while Devil Sold His Soul still have a way to go, *Blessed & Cursed* is their passport to the future. Well, it's a visa at least.

"When the band started six years ago, we wanted to do something different from all the trends going on," Ed remembers. "Most bands wanted to be either super-technical or went for the pop angle; there was never anything in between."

"At the end of the day we're all about writing songs for ourselves not writing something to become popular within a certain scene. If we do well, that's a massive bonus. Getting to write and record this in the first place is enough. We feel lucky to be doing what we're doing at all!"

If *Blessed & Cursed* is Devil Sold His Soul's *The Empire Strikes Back*, we can't wait for their *Return Of The Jedi*. 🙌

BLESSED & CURSED IS OUT NOW VIA CENTURY MEDIA. DEVIL SOLD HIS SOUL TOUR WITH ARCHITECTS FROM SEPTEMBER 30





Shot in April 2003 in the street outside the Sony office in New York. I closed the road with two limos, causing mayhem at rush hour... hence James laughing and Lars pointing.

HEAVY METAL PHOTOGRAPHY ISN'T EASY. YOU'VE GOT TO WORK WITH CRAZY SCHEDULES AND EVEN MORE DERANGED ARTISTS ON A DAILY BASIS. AS HE TALKS US THROUGH SOME OF HIS GREATEST *METAL HAMMER* HITS DUE TO BE FEATURED IN THE HOTLY ANTICIPATED SIX SHOOTERS EXHIBITION IN LONDON, OUR VETERAN SNAPPER-EXTRAORDINAIRE MICK HUTSON EXPLAINS THAT IT ISN'T THAT HARD, REALLY. YOU JUST HAVE TO...

SHOOT TO THRILL



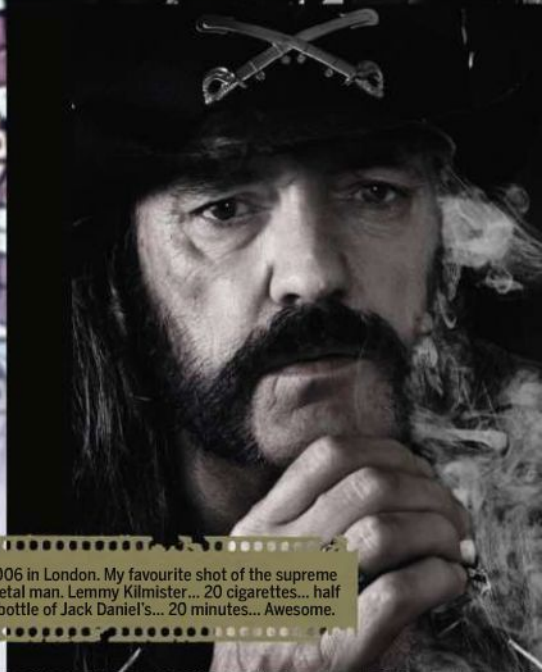
Aerosmith, shot in Birmingham in 1993. This was on the Get A Grip tour. It was all over in the first 10 seconds of the show; I had three songs left to shoot, but knew I had the *Metal Hammer* cover shot.



Ozzy in an LA studio, 2004. Hammer had the craziest make-up artist and I spent most of the shoot taking off his make-up – it was so heavy. Ozzy was a natural Dracula.



I did this Kiss shot for Hammer back in 1996. London's Wembley Arena, backstage, Spinal Tap fashion. Fab session, all over in five minutes but total concentration and professionalism.



2006 in London. My favourite shot of the supreme metal man. Lemmy Kilmister... 20 cigarettes... half a bottle of Jack Daniel's... 20 minutes... Awesome.



This was taken in LA in 2001. Marilyn Manson 'Unsafe' is probably one of my most famous shots – it's even been used as an example in modern youth culture/sociology classes! Everyone thinks Manson wrote this on his chest... it was me! It wasn't my first choice of wording but it was the most acceptable!



2001. London. Queens Of The Stone Age. I'd hired a studio but they were literally too drunk to stand against a backdrop so the idea was cancelled. A bottle of wine was opened for all of us – I drank it fast with the band and soon we were all giggling, so I propped them up against a wall and fell apart laughing. I took about 10 frames. This is how I will always remember them.

TAKING THE MICK

Metal Hammer cover snapper Mick Hutson and five other music photographers have joined forces for an exhibition entitled Six Shooters. The other photographers have shot for some of the world's biggest publications as well as record labels: Andy Fallon, Paul Harries, Roger Sargent, Andrew Cotterill and Andy Willsher.

Running from July 22 – September 12 at The Proud Gallery in London, the exhibition will showcase some of the very best rock/alternative photography. The Proud Gallery is situated in The Horse Hospital

in the Stables Market on Chalk Farm Road, NW1 8AH. See www.musicphotographers.co.uk for details on the snappers, interviews with them and information on buying prints of the photos on display. The site states: "We formed as a collective in 2009 to collaborate and put together a book and exhibition. Since then we have been involved in several charitable projects including working alongside the Teenage Cancer Trust and Creative Way Youth Projects."

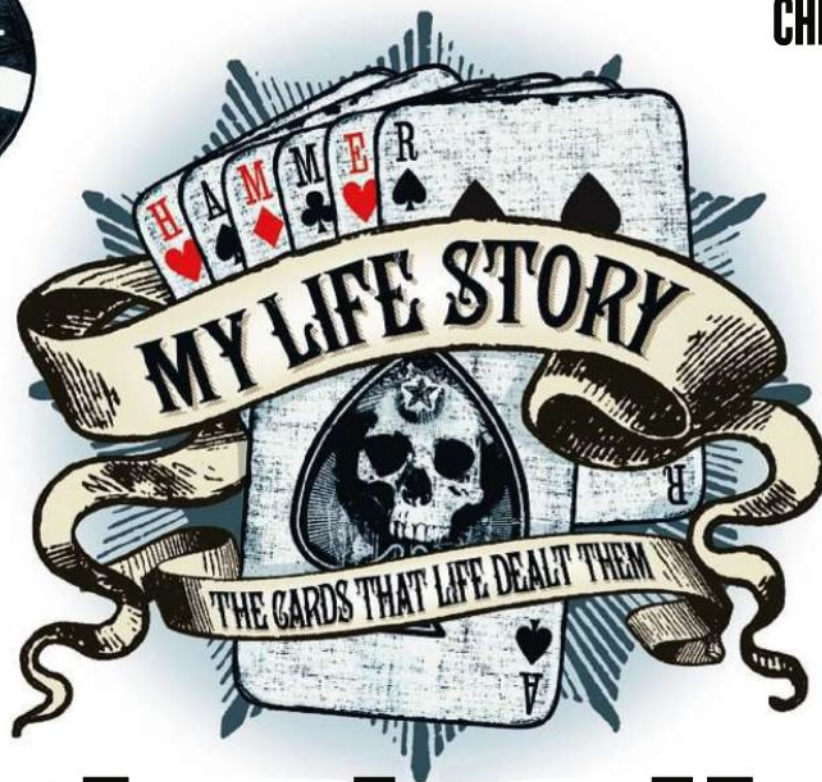
So, if you're near London this summer, be sure to check out this awesome exhibition.





**"My sister got me into
metal. Everything about
it was so attractive"**

◆◆ ALEX LJUNG ◆◆



Alexi Laiho

CHILDREN OF BODOM guitarist Alexi Laiho - the wild child of Finnish metal - has seen it all, both ups and downs, in his career. But now, it's all about the 'bubblegum rock'...

Words: Joel McIver. Pics: Terhi Ylimäinen.

WHERE AND WHEN WERE YOU BORN?

"I was born in a suburb of Helsinki called Espoo on April 8, 1979. Yeah, I hit fuckin' 31 this April. For me, it doesn't mean shit. Everyone freaks out about turning 30, but I don't care."

DID YOU GROW UP IN A MUSICAL ENVIRONMENT?

"Definitely. Every member of my family played a musical instrument. My dad played the piano and organ, my mom played flute and sang in a choir, and my sister played the piano as well. My parents are still singing in choirs all over fuckin' Finland."

WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO HEAVY METAL?

"My older sister got me into it. When I was seven years old she played me her Guns N' Roses, Twisted Sister, Mötley Crüe and Skid Row tapes. Everything about it was so fuckin' attractive: how they played, the sound of the guitar, the way the guys looked. They were dangerous. I was so fuckin' drawn into it. And I still am."

IS IT TRUE THAT YOUR FATHER TAUGHT YOU TO DRIVE WHEN YOU WERE 10 YEARS OLD?

"It's true, yeah. He taught me in his fuckin' Alfa

Romeo three-litre V6, which is not too shabby for a first fuckin' car! One of my passions is cars, along with music and skateboarding. What are my dream cars? Well, that's the coolest fuckin' thing - I've actually got 'em. When I was a kid I used to watch *Knight Rider* and my first dream car was a Pontiac Trans-Am. It was the coolest thing ever. I got a Trans Am GTA a couple of years ago. It's fuckin' awesome, dude! Then I saw *The Blues Brothers* and I loved the fuckin' 1974 Dodge Monaco that they were driving. It has a 7.3 litre engine! As a joke in an interview one time, I said that I wanted one, and that if anyone had that car, they should sell it to me. Then this guy contacted me via our record label and fuckin' sold me one!"

IT TOOK A FEW YEARS FOR CHILDREN OF BODOM TO BECOME SUCCESSFUL. WAS IT TOUGH AT TIMES?

"Yes, it was a lot of hard work - but it's all fuckin' worth it. We got sort of popular in Europe and Japan after two albums, but in the UK and the USA and the rest of the world it was really hard. But we always had this drive to go forward, so we worked hard in those places. I'm really happy with the fact that shit is starting to happen."

WAS THERE A SPECIFIC POINT WHEN YOU REALISED THAT

CHILDREN OF BODOM WAS A SUCCESS?

"For me, it was when I realised that I didn't have to have a job, which happened after *Hatebreeder* in 1999. The best job that I had before that was in construction: it was a lot of hard work, but good money. The worst job I ever had was in telemarketing, which is the worst goddamn job in the whole fuckin' world. I had to go in there at 10am on a Saturday and wake people up with a phone call, saying, 'Do you want to buy a dictionary?' I felt so bad for these people. It's a fuckin' horrible job and I do not recommend it to anybody!"

HOW DID YOU GET YOUR 'WILD CHILD' NICKNAME, AND WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO GROW OUT OF IT?

"Ha ha ha! You know what, dude, I got that nickname way before we started the band - but I'm thinking,





"I was a little fucked in the head. To this day, I'm still fighting"

ALEXI LAIHO

it's pretty fuckin' lame that I'm in my 30s and still calling myself 'Wild Child'. I think it's time to let it go, but then again, I know that in my heart I'm always gonna be a wild child, no matter what."

YOU HAD YOUR GUITARS STOLEN IN 2002. DID YOU EVER FIND OUT WHO DID IT?

"Yes, my two Jackson guitars were stolen. I never found out who did it. I wish I did. Let me put it this way, dude: I'm not a violent person and I never start a fight, but if I ever found that motherfucker, I would break his fuckin' arms in a fraction of a second, whoever the fuck he was. Those guitars were my fuckin' life. They meant so much to me that it was ridiculous."

OBVIOUSLY THIS ISN'T AN EASY SUBJECT TO DISCUSS, BUT YOU ATTEMPTED SUICIDE IN THE LATE 1990s. DID IT TAKE A LONG TIME BEFORE YOU WERE IN A BETTER PLACE, MENTALLY?

"Yes, I was a little fucked in the head. It took a little while. I decided one day that I never wanted to feel like that ever again. People around me were telling me that I should do something about this. But the way I work is that if people tell me 'You gotta do this, you gotta do that', I'm gonna do the opposite. It was a decision that I made by myself, that I wanted to feel better. It took a couple of years, but I got over it, you know. To this day, I'm still fighting... but I don't dwell on depression any more, and anger and shit like that. I'm all right."

DID YOU HAVE THERAPY?

"Yes, I did. I was committed [detained in a secure hospital unit] a couple of times, and they told me, 'Look, either

you're gonna see a psychiatrist or you're gonna stay here for a long

time'. The first time I saw the psychiatrist, I hated her and I thought she was a fuckin' bitch, and I ended up in the hospital again. It took a while, but I saw this woman again, and she turned out pretty cool. She helped me get through some stuff. I didn't even know what the hell was going on in my head. I'm not a fuckin' psychiatrist, but the one thing I can tell you is that when you feel that way, the one thing you don't want is for other people to tell you what to do. You actually want them to listen. That's all. It's not that fuckin' difficult, seriously."

YOU AND KERRY KING OF SLAYER APPEARED IN AN INTERVIEW ON THE LAST UNHOLY ALLIANCE DVD, AND YOU SEEMED A LITTLE OVERAWED...

"You know, when you're opening up for Slayer, you absolutely know who the big boys are, even if you're lucky enough not to get 'Slayered' off stage. We only got Slayered a couple of nights. It was Slayer, Lamb Of God and Mastodon... and us, going out there with our bubblegum rock, ha ha ha! I thought they were gonna fuckin' kill us out there, but actually it didn't happen so much. The fans were really cool. Anyway, there comes a point when you just have to say, 'Fuck you, motherfuckers - this is what we do!' It was a challenge, and I love a fuckin' challenge. That's really what keeps me going. Don't worry about whether people are gonna hate you or love you: just get your fuckin' ass up there and rock."

YOU RECENTLY TOURED WITH CANNIBAL CORPSE, WHO PLAY RADICALLY DIFFERENT MUSIC TO BODOM...

"Ha ha ha, yeah! It was really good. It was so cool that this fuckin' old-school Florida death metal band were actually opening up for us. It was weird. But we hung out and had a good time, it was a killer package."

TELL US A BIT ABOUT YOUR OTHER BAND, KYLÄHULLUT.

"The punk band? That was just a joke from the get-go. I was at home and I thought that I could either spend my time off sitting on my PlayStation or playing punk rock with my best friends and getting fucked up. Out of these two options, I thought I'd go and play punk rock! It's not a serious thing, we just do it for ourselves."

YOU'VE SAID THAT YOUR HANGOVERS ARE SOMETIMES SO BAD THAT YOU NEED A TRANQUILLISER IN ORDER TO FACE THE PRESS. WHEN DOES THE PAIN OF A HANGOVER OUTWEIGH THE PLEASURE OF GETTING DRUNK?

"Well, it's a funny thing. Alcohol is something that makes me fuckin' happy. It's one of my best friends. As a matter of fact, you can compare alcohol to a woman: she can make you feel so goddamn high, or she can make you so miserable that it's far beyond everything."

YOU ARE KNOWN AS ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST ACCOMPLISHED METAL GUITARISTS. DID YOU KNOW THAT KIRK HAMMETT OF METALLICA HAS SAID SOME HIGHLY COMPLIMENTARY THINGS ABOUT YOUR PLAYING?

"That's what I heard. It was amazing. That stuff is really flattering and rewarding, but then again I don't want to dwell on it for too long, because it's just going to fuck with your head. I don't do this shit for the awards or for the compliments - I do it for the music and for the love of playing. End of fuckin' story."

CHILDREN OF BODOM PLAY BLOODSTOCK ON SATURDAY AUGUST 14

CRAP SHOOT

What gets Alexi's seal of approval?

FAVOURITE DRINK

"I love whiskey and beer, but what I'm drinking now is a White Russian. Take two shots of vodka or

bourbon and a splash of [coffee liqueur] Kahlua, and fill it up with low-fat milk. Not cream, or you'll be fuckin' stuffed. You have 15 of those and you'll have a great fuckin' night."

FAVOURITE BOOK

"I don't usually read books, honestly, but I like biographies. I just finished Slash's autobiography. It was pretty fuckin' awesome."

FAVOURITE FILM

"My favourite movie is *The Big Lebowski*, definitely. Let's go bowling!"

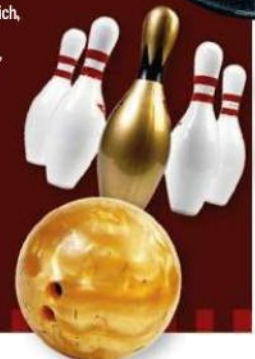
FAVOURITE FOOD

"I know it sounds stupid, but I fuckin'

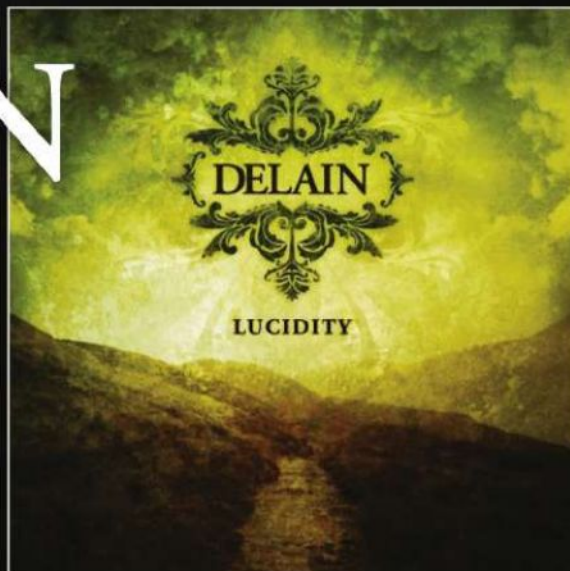
love sandwiches. When I go to Subway and get a club sandwich, it's my favourite shit in the world. Ham, turkey, jalapenos, a lot of mustard - the whole fuckin' thing."

FAVOURITE CITY

"Los Angeles, definitely. It's got that chilled vibe. I want to live there for half the year and the other half in Helsinki. I got my girl there and a lot of friends there, so what's not to like?"



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BAND NAME
AIRBOURNE

Hard Rock Hell



SPANISH INQUISITION

AIRBOURNE are the Aussie rockers who reckon there's no way but the hard way. Our Cardinals are always up for a fight and challenged them to a rigging climbing contest.

If you had to choose one, sex, booze or rock'n'roll, which would it be?

Ross via metalhammer.co.uk

Joel O'Keefe (vocals, guitar): "Rock'n'roll."

Ryan O'Keefe (drums): "Rock'n'roll."

Joel: "Well, rock'n'roll encompasses sex and booze, so therefore you get all three by default."

You seem like nice, unassuming chaps. Are you sure you're cut out for rock'n'roll?

John, Peterborough

Ryan: "Well, we've been doing it since I was 11. I'm now 24, my first show was when I was 13, I'll probably live to maybe 60, so what's that percentage-wise? Eleven years of playing shows, that's almost... well, a good part of my life. 'Cut out' is something you could say of someone playing for three years. As far as I'm concerned we can do this until we die."

Would you fuck a reasonably hot, fun-loving girl if you knew she was thinking about a real stud at the time?

Kirsty, Sussex

Ryan: "Yeah. I'm not going to see her tomorrow, so..."

Joel: "A fuck's a fuck."

Ryan: "It'd be a challenge and I enjoy a challenge."

Joel: "I'd give it a go, try and wake her up a bit!"

When you say there ain't no way but the hard way, you know that's bullshit, right?

Sam, Chatham

Ryan: "Not the way we've learned it and we've come from pretty much the bottom of the barrel, from not being able to get on welfare in the early days, which is worse than being on welfare. So for us there ain't no other way."

Kylie or Dannii?

Adrian, via email

Joel: "It's a tough one."

Ryan: "I'd go for Dannii."

Joel: "I take this question really seriously. Well, if he's going to take Dannii, I'm going to take Kylie."

You know that video where you're on Tits And Ass airlines and the other passengers are hot women? That was awesome. Are you a member of the mile high club?

Peter, Kent

Ryan: "Is there one? An actual club?"

Hammer: We don't think it's official. It's not like you get a card or something.

Ryan: [laughs] "Well, put it this way, a couple of guys got lucky at that session."

Joel: "What happens on the plane stays on the plane. There were four snakes on the plane..."

Joel, I saw you climb the scaffolding at Download. Did your parents make you wear a helmet when you were a kid?

Ike, London

Joel: "No, they just thought I had a lot of energy. They probably hid the lollies. I got distracted easily in class 'cos I didn't want to be there; I had too much energy to focus on one thing. Playing rock'n'roll is different, though - playing my guitar was all I ever wanted to do. Sometimes someone else in the band has more energy than me though, depending on what they did the night before."

Joel, what's the worst near-miss you've had climbing the rigging on stage?

Melanie via email

Joel: "There was one time when I first started doing it. There was a pole between me and my guitar, and normally I wouldn't do this but for some reason I jammed it through and got around to play the guitar, which isn't easy... then my foot slipped and it was the neck of the guitar, hooked over the pole, which saved me. I pulled myself back and thought, 'I think

I'll be hooking it through more often."

Ryan: "And the thing is, those necks break easily."

Joel: "And that was on a guitar that had a broken neck already and was held together with glue."

Hammer: It sounds like it could have been more than the guitar that ended up with a broken neck...

Joel: "I'd have been dead - it was over 100 feet up!"

Joel's six pack on the No Guts No Glory sleeve is totally Photoshopped, yes?

Stuart, Belfast

Ryan: "It's drawn. It's from a 2008 tour photo which is online, so have a look on Google and you'll see it."

Joel: "In between tours, beer and KFC take their toll, hence the reason why we used a tour photo 'cos old chubby boy here doesn't look quite the same."

In the early days, did you advertise your band as an AC/DC tribute band just to get punters in the door?

Nick Austin via Facebook

Ryan: "No, we started playing with no punters through the door at all and basically built from there. It was literally security guys spreading the word."

Joel: "First show we did was in front of the bartender, two security guards and one guy sitting at the bar who was a notorious criminal. He wasn't too

happy about us being there with our big Marshall amps. He told us, 'If you're going to make some fucking noise, I better fucking like it.' We thought, well, he's gonna kill us anyway, 'cos he's not going to like what we do, 'cos it's going to be so loud - we had big Marshall stacks, we'd saved up all our money to buy these stacks. So we turned 'em on, played our set, halfway through the second song I jumped on the bar, did a solo in his face, kicked his beer over, jumped back on the stage... and he loved it. We thought, 'We have to give it to this guy so much and show that we're gonna stand our ground no matter what he says.' At the end he came up and said, 'I liked that.' He was at every other show for a while. I don't know where he is now, though..."

AC/DC are, for all intents and purposes, a British band... as were their predecessors the Easybeats... Nick Cave And The Bad Seeds realised this and moved to Brighton. What makes you think you can be in a successful Australian rock band given that you come from and live in Australia? It's a bit naive, isn't it?

William, Edinburgh

Ryan: "The thing is with us, we no longer have enough time to base ourselves anywhere, so we technically don't live in Australia. We're constantly touring. If we did have breaks we probably would move to the UK. We did stay in the States for six months but we were touring constantly there too. But we always say when we come to the UK it feels like home. I said that yesterday when we got off the bus: 'Bloody hell, this feels like home!'"

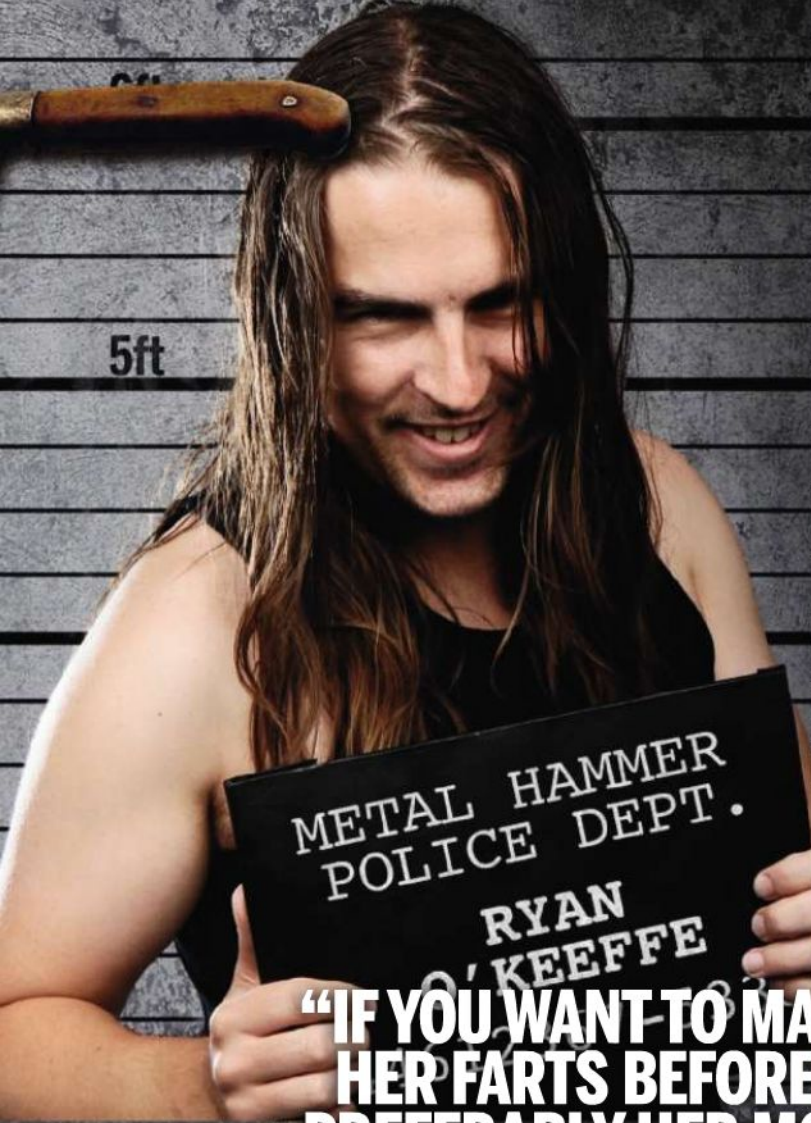
Joel: "Simple things, like the way people are, they're really cool people, the food, the whole vibe, even when you go for a drive and see the countryside, a lot of it is similar to the countryside in Victoria, the green grass and trees. There are lots of similarities and you guys all love rock'n'roll, which is the greatest thing."

Is it true that you can tell if an Australian's a gentleman if he offers to light his girlfriend's farts before lighting his own?

Ross, Northampton

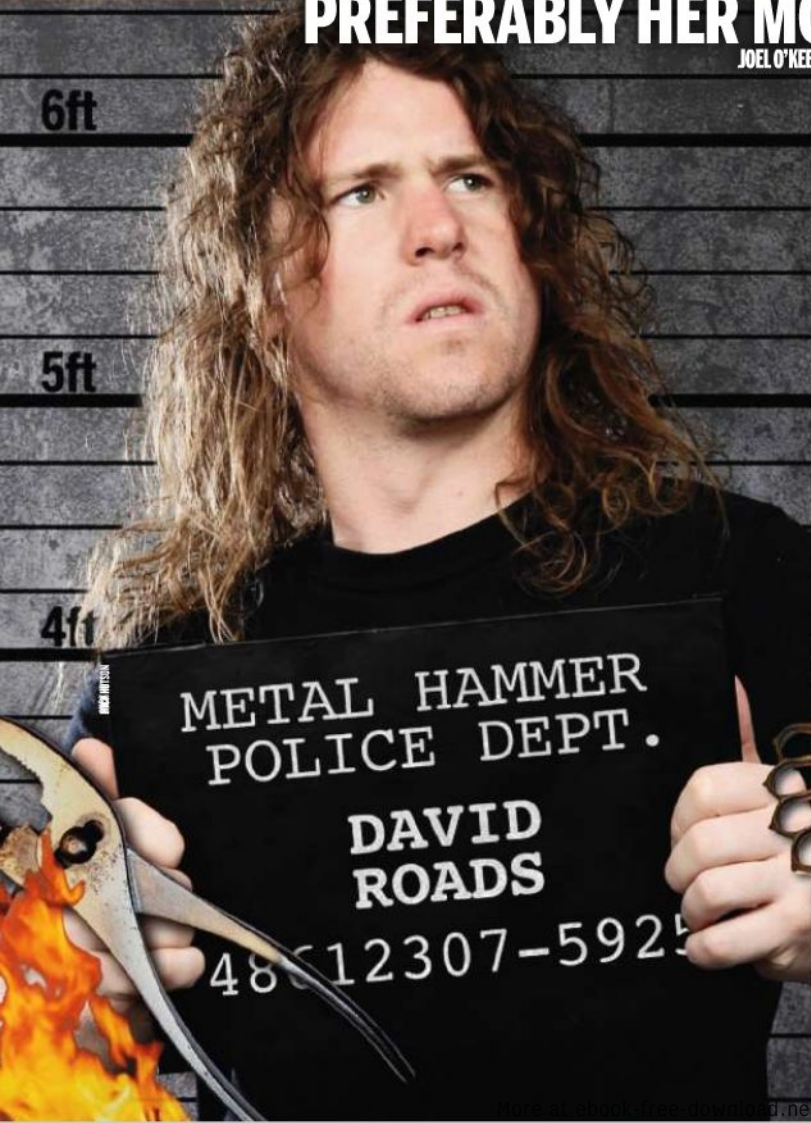
Joel: "Yes, that's definitely what you're going to have to do. If you're going to ask the father of a girl if it's OK to marry her, you should make sure at dinner that night that you light her farts before you light her own. And preferably her mother's as well, you know?"

AIRBOURNE WILL BE TOURING THE UK THIS DECEMBER. THEY HEADLINE HARD ROCK HELL IV ON DECEMBER 4



**"IF YOU WANT TO MARRY A GIRL, LIGHT
HER FARTS BEFORE YOUR OWN. AND
PREFERABLY HER MOTHER'S AS WELL"**

JOEL O'KEEFFE



Conclusion

Iesu Cristo! Airborne know how to play an exciting show, but lighting a woman's farts before your own? It's a feminist abomination! Giuseppe, fetch me pack of chilli powder and a turkey baster, it's gonna be a long night! Music journalism: a million chimpanzees banging on typewriters for a billion years could never come up with this shit. Think you can do better? Check out who's coming up in Spanish Inquisition at www.metalhammer.co.uk and send your questions to chainmail@futurenet.co.uk.

Down (left to right): Pepper Keenan, Jimmy Bower, Phil Anselmo, Todd Strange, Kirk Windstein



Track listing

Down

TEMPTATION'S WINGS
LIFER
PILLARS OF ETERNITY
REHAB
HAIL THE LEAF
UNDERNEATH
EVERYTHING
EYES OF THE SOUTH
JAIL
LOSING ALL
STONE THE CROW
PRAY FOR THE LOCUST
SWAN SONG
BURY ME IN SMOKE

PHIL ANSELMO: VOCALS
PEPPER KEENAN: GUITAR
KIRK WINDSTEIN: GUITAR, BASS
JIMMY BOWER: DRUMS
TODD STRANGE: WHISTLE
PRODUCED BY DOWN AND MATT THOMAS



The Story Behind... **Down** NOLA



IT WAS 1995. The year that Wurzel quit Motörhead, Metallica escaped from the studio to headline Donington, and Helloween drummer Ingo Schwichtenberg committed suicide. Slipknot and System Of A Down started, and Kyuss, The Cult and Saint Vitus all split up. The year of riots in Brixton, London; Blaze Bayley's recording debut with Iron Maiden on *The X Factor* album and new releases from AC/DC (*Ballbreaker*), Monster Magnet (*Dopes To Infinity*) and Ozzy (*Ozzmosis*). And out in New Orleans, Down were about to take their first public steps.

Words: Malcolm Dome.

The birth of this band is really the story of two pals: Pantera frontman Phil Anselmo and Corrosion Of Conformity guitarist Pepper Keenan.

"Phil and I used to run across each other all the time," recalls Pepper. "And we always wanted to work together. The problem we had was trying to fit anything into very busy schedules, as our bands were both taking off by the start of 1991."

However during the Christmas period in '91, they were at home in New Orleans and, armed with beers, locked themselves in a garage and started to jam out ideas.

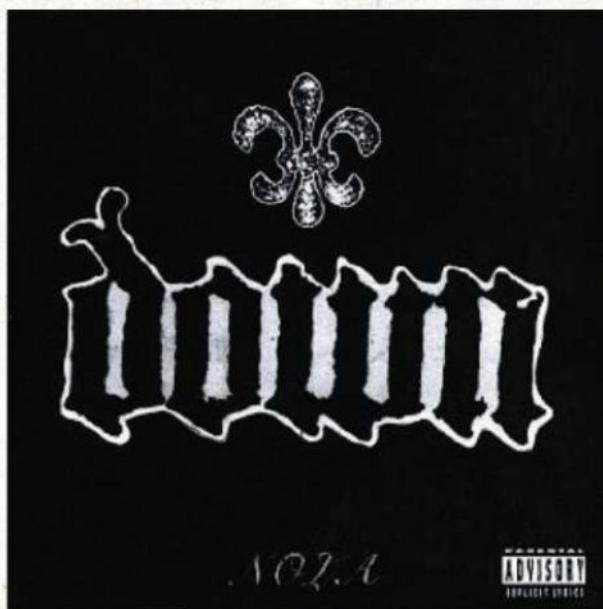
"We wanted an underground vibe, like the one we heard when listening to bands like Cathedral or Saint Vitus, not that we were after anything doomy as such, but just to get the same uncompromising approach. We wanted this to be the sort of band we'd dig, even if we weren't in it."

"Phil already had the name Down and we hit a groove right away. On our first day, we wrote three songs: *Temptation's Wings*, *Bury Me In Smoke* and *Losing All*."

"The title 'Bury Me In Smoke' had been with me for a long time. But I'd never gotten around to using it before. Phil just made the lyrics up on the spot. Amazing."

Determined to keep the momentum going, Phil and Pepper decided to record this triple on a four-track machine, although they weren't thinking about anything else other than having a cassette to trade with people.

"We were both into the tape-trading scene. There was this cool underground vibe where fans would exchange info on bands they'd come across and copy demo tapes, sending them out to everyone, just to spread the word. It was how unsigned



"I'd play the demo to people without telling them who was involved"

PEPPER KEENAN

bands got to be heard. This scene actually helped to kickstart Metallica's career.

"I'd come back from Europe armed with all this cool shit from bands like Mercyful Fate. It was such a massive part of the metal experience. We thought this was the best way to get Down's music out there."

The duo came up with a logo ("It's the one we still use today!") and a cover for the cassette, which featured a photo of an

almost unrecognisable Pepper smoking a joint, and they took it on tour with them, the idea being to play this to fans and see what the reaction was like.

"When Corrosion Of Conformity next went on the road, I had a load of copies of the tape with me," explains Pepper. "I'd play it to people without telling them who was involved, just to get an honest opinion. I was amazed at how much they loved it."

So many of them asked for copies that I ended up having to run off a lot more tapes to keep up with the demand. And still nobody knew who was involved! We managed to keep that a secret for so long.

"A year after that COC tour, we were back on the road and ended up in Stockholm. A kid came up to me after the show and he was wearing a Down t-shirt that he'd made himself! He'd taken the logo from the cassette cover. I couldn't believe what I was seeing so I asked him about where he'd heard about this band, and it turns out that I'd given him the tape when we were last in town! But he'd forgotten that it had come from me, and was busy going on about this amazing band he'd discovered. That was when I knew we had something genuinely happening."

In all, Phil and Pepper did three demos, so by 1994 they'd collected nine or 10 originals, and were ready to take the whole project up a notch. Still, nobody had a clue who was behind Down, but all that was about to change.

"We decided to do our first gig. It was in New Orleans during Mardi Gras, which would put it at the start of the year."

Of course, this decision meant that there had to be a proper lineup, so Phil and Pepper were joined by guitarist Kirk Windstein and bassist Todd Strange, both from Crowbar, and drummer Jimmy Bower, who'd been a founder-member of Crowbar but at that stage was playing guitar for Eyehategod.

"We opened for GWAR and, even if I say so myself, we blew them away. People were going nuts when they saw Phil onstage – remember, Pantera were huge at the time. So, the secret was out. Warner Brothers began to poke around and offered us a deal."

What Down were doing was almost reinventing Southern rock, adding in twists of sludge metal and also slabs of their own dark groove. It was a sinister, yet enticing concoction. And if the demos suggested something special was being brewed in the Louisiana swamps, then the debut album was to prove a sensation.

However, the whole recording process wasn't to be at all smooth. In fact, Mother Nature did her best to scupper the whole project.

"We went into a local studio, Ultrasonic. Everything was going smoothly, until the rains came one night. That was frightening. The ceiling in the studio was made of glass, and that night it began to rain very heavily and just did not stop. We could only stand there and watch helplessly as water began to come in through the ceiling and threatened to soak our equipment. Everything was still plugged in at the time, so we really risked getting electrocuted.

"We had our guitars on, with water up to our knees. It wasn't fun. Eventually, we just had to unplug everything very carefully and move it all out."

Fortunately, none of the recordings were ruined by the flooding and the band had done all of the basic work. But they then had to cool their heels for about a month, as the studio got rid of the damaged equipment, dried the walls and got back into business.

"Yeah, that was irritating, but we all felt that we should wait and complete the album at Ultrasonic – it just felt right."

The process was completed in January 1995, having started the previous August.

"It's strange – we've never done an album like that again. But it ended up taking the time we needed, and the break did allow us to take a step back and listen to what we already had."



What happened to the famous Southern hospitality?!

"This is the Down record that's closest to the vibe we wanted. There's something really exciting that we captured"

PEPPER KEENAN

The most enduring song on the album is *Stone The Crow*, which was something of a minor hit when released as the first single from the record. And Down also shot a video for it.

"We filmed this in a place called Des Allemands in Louisiana, which is a small town just outside New Orleans. Part of it was done in The Smile Bar and the rest in what they call the Shrimp Boat Graveyard. It was a trip doing the guitar solo on top of a half-sunken shrimp boat!"

One thing that's often caused confusion among Down fans is how much input Todd Strange had on the record. While most assume he actually appears on it, and he is credited on the album with playing bass, the reality is somewhat different, as Pepper explains:

"All the bass parts are played by Kirk, none by Todd. The fact is that it was partly his choice, and partly ours. To be honest, Todd wasn't up to playing on the record, because what we wanted from the bass wasn't something any of us – including him – felt that he could deliver. There was no fall out – the choice was made in the best interest of everyone, and Todd did carry on playing with us live for a time afterwards."

The album was called *NOLA*, which stands for New Orleans (NO) Louisiana (LA), their home city, and released in

September 1995. Although it wasn't a huge chart success, only getting to number 57 in the US, nonetheless the record has gone on to sell over a million copies. And in Pepper's opinion it's still the band's best album to date.

"For all of us, this is the Down record that's closest to the vibe we wanted to create. There's something really exciting that we captured. *NOLA* has the underground spirit which first inspired Phil and me. I'm proud of what we created."

III: OVER THE UNDER IS OUT NOW VIA ROADRUNNER RECORDS

THE NEXT CHAPTER...

After playing just 13 shows in support of *NOLA*, Down were over. Well, for a few years.

"We all went back to our other bands, but there was always a partial plan for us to get back together," says Pepper. "But in the end what brought about the return of Down were the fans. They wouldn't let it go; in the end it was their enthusiasm that brought us back."

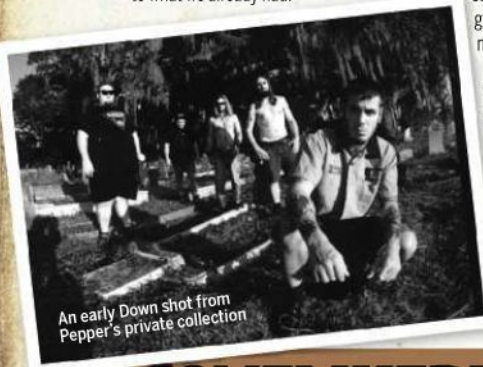
In 2002, Down came out of hiatus with Pantera's Rex Brown now on bass; he'd replaced Todd in 1999. The band wrote and recorded second album *Down II: A Bustle In Your Hedgerow* in 28 days, fuelled on all sorts of substances. It was released in March 2002, following which the band toured across America on the Ozzfest bill.

After this there was another break before Down returned for a low-key European tour in 2006 – including a now-legendary secret main stage opening slot at Download. This was followed by *Down III: Over The Under* in 2007 and a more extensive two-year-long world tour. Now the band are embroiled in

another surge of activity. Not only were they one of the big attractions on the Metal Hammer Stage at the High Voltage Festival (they headlined on July 25), but they're also busying themselves with album number four.

"We're a long way down the road already," reveals Pepper. "We've got lots of songs prepared, and the idea is to go into the studio – Phil's home one, actually – and knock this out towards the end of the year."

"The vibe we are looking for is something spontaneous and energetic, to get back to the way things were on the first album. There is nothing wrong with the way we've worked since, but... we wanna go backwards!"



An early Down shot from Pepper's private collection

SOMEWHERE IN TIME Where Down stand in the chain of inspiration.



LYNYRD SKYNYRD
Street Survivors
The original and greatest of all Southern rock bands in their prime. From 1977, this is a crucial part of the blueprint for all swamp rock.

DOWN
NOLA

The album that did more than any other to drag Southern rock out of its sense of torpor and into a sparkling new era. It still had those blues and country roots, but added a bite of metal and a hint of sludge. *NOLA* is still regarded as the band's finest album, being born from a genuine love of music rather than any commercial considerations.



COC
America's Volume Dealer
The band took a major leap from the hardcore/metal worlds in 2000 into a more Southern direction – albeit still with jagged edges.



BLACK LABEL SOCIETY
The Blessed Hellride
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REVIEW

ALL THE SINNERS AND WINNERS

ALSO UNDER THE HAMMER...



Albums/DVDs

86 36 Crazyfists

Is the Alaskans' latest a righteous return or only half-baked?

Plus! Angel Witch, Buckcherry, Delain, D'espairsray, Dirty Little Rabbits, Drowning Pool, Hellyeah, Ion Dissonance, Kingdom Of Sorrow, Lamb Of God, Pearl, Primal Fear, Saxon, Rush, Sonic Syndicate and more!

Detector

92 Soilwork

Hammer digs down to the roots of Sweden's magnificent melodic metallers.

Lives

102 hRh Roadtrip

Grand Magus, Evile and Skindred get unleashed in Ibiza!

Plus! Coheed And Cambria, Deathstars, Ozzy, Stone Temple Pilots and many, many more!



IRON MAIDEN THE FINAL FRONTIER

Heavy metal heroes pull out all the stops on album number 15

UNLIKE most bands of a certain age, Iron Maiden haven't chosen to spend their golden years taking it easy. The last two years have seen them tour the planet in a jumbo jet piloted by their singer, play innumerable shows in hitherto unexplored territory and release a movie, the still-gobsmacking *Flight 666*. Perhaps all this frantic activity explains why *The Final Frontier*, their excellent 15th

album, is among their most reflective to date. Not that it's a mellow album. Far from it: this is metal with a capital 'M' – 10 songs that explore a whole range of musical territory, both within and beyond the usual parameters. The trademark Maiden gallop is here, and there are whole songs as heavy – or heavier – than anything the band have ever done. Dig deeper, though, and you'll find whole swathes of music that owe a debt to prog rock, classic rock and even folk. Maiden obviously know that at this stage of their career – just as at any point over the last 30 years – there is no area of inspiration which can't be tapped, and no boundaries that can't be crossed. Nowhere is this more evident than on the first track, a two-parter called *Satellite 15... The Final Frontier*. Steve Harris's unmistakable finger-style bass, run through heavy distortion, lays down a drone that builds in tension and power for a full two and half minutes while guitars wail eerily. There's a complete change of tone after five minutes, when a chugging guitar

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SCI-FI COMBINED WITH METAL? PURE MAIDEN

riff accompanies singer Bruce Dickinson's lament of a spacefarer bidding farewell to his family. Sci-fi combined with metal? Pure Maiden.

The *Final Frontier* takes its time before the music breaks into the full-speed stomp for which this band are famous, with *El Dorado* – an odd choice of advance single, as it's one of the album's less compelling songs – followed by two epic semi-ballads, both of which come with atmospheric introductions that owe as much to the laidback sound of the West Coast as they do to classic English metal. In the first, *Mother Of Mercy*, Bruce tells a tale of warfare that is Maiden to the core ('All around there is the smell of death and fire'), while in *Coming Home* he sings of something or other being '1,000 leagues away', his choice of language a perfect illustration of why we love this band so much.

Highlights of the album are many.

There's the immense *Isle Of Avalon*, with its nine minutes of distilled sonic profundity complete with storm sound effects and a superb, progressive section that sounds a tad like the keyboard solo from The Who's *Won't Get Fooled Again*. The *Final Frontier* isn't a perfect album – *Starblind* could have been dropped and no one would've complained – but to hear an album this good from a band of this vintage is nigh-on miraculous.

Take the time to digest this huge album (most of the songs come in at over seven minutes) and you'll undoubtedly reach the conclusion that Iron Maiden have evolved into

a band that are happy with their maturity and in full command of their many skills. We're unbelievably lucky that they're still around after this many years. Long may the Maiden reign. [8] JOEL McIVER

INFLUENCE ON: METALLICA, DREAM THEATER, HELLOWEEN

ALSO TRY:

IRON MAIDEN
Powerslave
EMI, 1984

JUDAS PRIEST
Nostradamus
SONY/BMG, 2008

HEAVEN & HELL
The Devil You Know
ROADRUNNER, 2008

ALLEGAEON

FRAGMENTS OF FORM AND FUNCTION
LISTENABLE



The new face of ruthless modern metal

THE very essence of a modern extreme metal band, Allegaeon would be easy to dismiss as inveterate box-tickers were it not for the sheer, psychotic zeal they exhibit throughout their debut album. Songs like breakneck opener *The Cleansing* bring to mind everyone from Bodom and Arch Enemy through to Chimaira and D      , but there is plenty here to suggest that this Colorado quintet will soon patent an identity of their own. Allegaeon seem to have mastered the art of holding back from too many indulgent displays of fret-melting wizardry, preferring to use their self-evident technical prowess sparingly and enhancing its impact as a result. When everything gels, Allegaeon sound like real contenders. [7]

DOM LAWSON

ANGEL WITCH

ANGEL WITCH –
30TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION
SANCTUARY



NWOBHM pearl resurfaces once more

1980 – arguably the greatest year in metal, in which *Ace Of Spades*, *British Steel*, *Heaven And Hell*, Iron Maiden's debut and *Blizzard Of Oz* were all released. Sitting alongside, and every bit as good, was the debut from London's Angel Witch. Although popular with the denim-clad hordes, press coverage was dismissive, seemingly for the crime of being influenced by Sabbath. Their gloriously tongue-in-cheek, occult-flavoured metal in turn influenced the likes of Candlemass and Metallica. The debut platter has aged perhaps better than any other NWOBHM record and ranks amongst the greatest metal albums of all time and benefits from great bonus material. [8]

ALASTAIR RIDDELL

BLACK SUNSHINE

BLACK SUNSHINE
BREAK SILENCE RECORDINGS



Middling rock from extreme sports star

VOCALIST/GUITARIST Matt Reardon opted to form Black Sunshine whilst convalescing from a skiing accident that almost cost him a leg. At the risk of sounding heartless, as a major name in the world of extreme sports he should really have stayed where his real talent lies. Despite containing some gifted musicians, including guitarist Charles Lee (Filter/Theory Of A Dead Man/John 5), Black Sunshine are ill-equipped to stand out from the congested modern rock market. Much-travelled producer Bob Marlette has used every trick in the book here, and this sprightly sounding album boasts some mildly agreeable moments but nothing we haven't already heard from Shinedown, Nickelback and the like. [4] DAVE LING

BLACK TUSK

TASTE THE SIN
RELAPSE



Savannah rockers playing with ire

FOR some, the last straw with Mastodon was when they turned into a Tolstoy-quoting Rush tribute band. For some people though, there ARE NO FUCKING STRAWS! THE FIRST STRAW IS THE LAST STRAW, YOU CUNT! And for those angry souls we have Black Tusk. Those who feared a let-up in pace would befall the Savannah power trio when they signed to Relapse, should relax; if anything, their second LP is even more brutally effective than their debut. Their signature sound pits three different vocal styles (metal, hardcore, stoner) over unstoppable monster truck grooves. John Baizley's intricate artwork automatically makes you think of Kylesa, a comparison which Black Tusk are deserving of. [8]

JOHN DORAN

BUCKCHERRY

ALL NIGHT LONG
ELEVEN SEVEN MUSIC



Still rocking the classic way

MILLIONS of album sales and two Grammy nominations later, here's a message to all those who thought Buckcherry might turn out to be a flash in the pan moment of old-school indulgence: Josh Todd and Keith Nelson are here to stay – get used to it. Galvanised by its salacious, riff-laden opening title cut, the Californian band's fifth full-length release taps into a familiar AC/DC-meets-Aerosmith groove, keeping the listener satisfied 'til its searing finale of *Dead*. There will be few better 2010 dancefloor fillers in than *It's A Party*, which sounds like Cr  e jamming with Queen. In fact, *All Night Long* is so darned good, we can even forgive them for preaching with *Our World*, which has a video inspired by the BP oil pipeline disaster. [8]

DAVE LING

CAMP JASON

EPIPHANY
HARL RECORDS



Genre- and attention-defying German metal

EPIPHANY is a worrying indication that this German quartet still don't really know who they are. On an admirable quest to be non-conformist, they miss putting a cunning genre-defying stamp on the music world and instead confuse the hell out of it. The songwriting stumbles off on unsatisfying tangents while the vocals verge from saluting black metal and thrash to being disconcertingly nu metal. The riffs also want to please everyone and the result is occasionally exciting and rhythmic, but often ends up scattered and unconvincing. If their attitude's tongue-in-cheek then it's not obvious enough. If they're serious, the bipolar style is too unhinged to be clever. A little discipline would go a long way. [4] NIK YOUNG

DID YOU KNOW?

Eddie artist Derek Riggs claims he got the idea for his creation from a photo of a dead soldier's desiccated head during the Vietnam war.

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REVIEWS

ALL THE SINNERS AND WINNERS



36 Crazyfists' Roadrunner homecoming was an emotional affair

36 CRAZYFISTS

COLLISIONS AND CASTAWAYS

ROADRUNNER



Homecoming Alaskans turn to their dark side

SINCE first signing to Roadrunner in 2000, these Alaskans have released a DVD and five albums across various labels, pulled through the tragic loss of bassist JD Stuart to a 1996 car crash and, recently, parted ways amicably with bassist Mick Whitney. Back home with Roadrunner, *Collisions And Castaways* is now 36CF's first challenge with their new lineup. Drenched in emotion and noticeably darker and heavier than previous albums, it's also their most mature release to date. Brock Lindow's infamous gurgling vocals are immaculate and the lyrics dig deep, but tugging hard on their

Bay Area thrash roots and pushing Brock's fierce screams to the forefront, they've also added serious bite this time around. Guitarist Steve's production is slick but subtle, ensuring churning riffs stay gritty while the heart-tugging chorus of *Reviver* and cool, battered melodies of *Mercy And Grace* spotlight the band's sensitive side. *Trenches* tips a hat to At The Drive-In and the crushing tracks *The Deserter* and *Death Renames The Light* are poised to destroy all willing pits. *Caving In Spirals* seems straightforwardly metalcore among such competition, but this is probably because they've already lifted the bar so high. 36CF have never been ones to sell out or stagnate but, riding at 200 per cent this time, Roadrunner's prodigal sons have returned to truly do them proud. [8] NIK YOUNG

INFLUENCED BY
METALLICA, FAITH NO MORE, DEFTONES
ALSO TRY
POISON THE WELL
You Come Before You
ATLANTIC, 2003
KILLSWITCH ENGAGE
Killswitch Engage
ROADRUNNER, 2009
PANTERA
Far Beyond Driven
EASTWEST, 1994

ALBUM THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

Robert Trujillo Metallica

SANTANA
ABRAXAS
COLUMBIA

"Abraxas was the first time that I recognised the fusion between different styles, because on that record there were riffs, guitar solos and also a Latin flair with percussion. The artwork was amazing, too, and it left a real impression on me."

DELAIN
LUCIDITY
ROADRUNNER



Belated release of symphonic band's debut

ALTHOUGH the UK is still playing catch-up with Delain, the UK release of this Dutch act's debut album, considered unworthy here back in 2006, suggests that we are gaining ground our continental mainland neighbours. From Charlotte Wessels' exquisite voice to the keyboards of former Within Temptation man Martijn Westerholt and guest contribution from Nightwish bassist Marco Hietala, *Lucidity* taps the same elements that made us fall in love with last year's second album, *April Rain*, though it lacks the maturity and consistency. Sharon den Adel and Liv Kristine of Leaves' Eyes both appear, but besides the occasional truly great song such as *The Gathering*, *Lucidity* fails to preempt *April Rain*'s greatness. [6] DAVE LING

D'ESPAIRSRAY

IMMORTAL
GAN-SHIN



Japanese glamsters get retrospective

ONE of the big names in the Japanese 'visual kei' movement, (the glam precursor to J-Rock, dressed up as characters from *Final Fantasy*) D'espairsray wouldn't sound out of place on the soundtrack to a late 90s PlayStation fighting game. The tunes are catchy in an endearingly camp way, a high-energy fusion of nu metal and disco with histrionic vocals and haircuts that make balding men weep. This compilation, featuring 15 of their choicest cuts and an epilepsy-inducing live DVD, will doubtless find an audience with cosplayers and otaku the world over. Old duffers will be left bamboozled though, wondering what happened to the days when J-Rock meant bands like the Mad Capsule Markets. [6] DANIEL CAIRNS

DIRTY LITTLE RABBITS

DIRTY LITTLE RABBITS
THE END



No more clowning around

IS this a Shawn Crahan vanity project? Absolutely not. The cohesion and thought that's gone into this debut album ensures it stands in its own right. There are a lot of psychedelic influences, but more from Television and Talking Heads in the late 1970s than the previous decade. Michael Pfaff on keyboards has much to do with creating the atmosphere, and vocalist Shelia Katsoudas's vocal style – Cyndi Lauper with Tairrie B's intensity – adds to an overall vision of claustrophobia, distrust and darkness. There are no real standout songs – it all has to be taken as a whole – but *Professional Hit* and *I Love You* are clearly the foundation on which this is built. An impressively passionate album. [7] MALCOLM DOME

DROWNING POOL

DROWNING POOL
EILEVEN SEVEN



Nu metal survivors start to sink

THOUGH they've long since left their early confrontational edge behind, Drowning Pool's adherence to radio-friendly rock has resulted in their fourth effort being safe to the point of politeness. The Texans still know how to deliver hooks by the shedload; stomping opener *Let The Sin Begin* and *Horns Up* could easily be soundtracks to any WWE wrestler's opening strut, with former Soil man Ryan McCombe's Hetfield-esque roar bringing a defiant authority to proceedings. But the aggro-tinged tenderness of *Turn So Cold* and *Over My Head* are custom-built MOR fodder, and with the band now more like Nickelback than nu metal, you wonder how many people who grew up on the likes of *Bodies* will still care. [5] ADAM REES

EQUILIBRIUM

REKREATUR
NUCLEAR BLAST



A symphonic/folk metal imbalance

THE hideous painting of an absurd fantasy beast that adorns the cover of *Rekreatur* turns out to be somewhat apt, given that the music within also appears to be a crude combination of other entities. Cinematic and predominantly upbeat metal à la Turisas is the name of the game, the band having left behind the grittier folk metal of their previous albums to move into more accessible pastures. Throwing folk and symphonic metal together, the band steer from operatic parts to Caribbean-sounding tunes, but – a song called *Fahrtwind* aside – the main problem here is that the good ideas seem to show up only very briefly in the dense, ever-twisting material making the songs somewhat hard to connect with. [6] DAVYAL PATTERSON

FORLORN

THE ROTTING
RISING



Brummies lacking an individual spark

HAVING issued two warmly received EPs and opened for Death Angel, Malefice and more, Brummie bruisers Forlorn have spent four years laying the groundwork for this accomplished, weighty, debut album. Plowing a fertile furrow that fuses elements of doom rock and old-school death metal, *The Rotting*'s clear and powerful production amplifies the notion Forlorn have much to offer. The band's willingness to alternate the tempos, from Candlemass-style sludgy workouts to rib-rattling, thrash-tinged bursts of pace – sometimes during the same song, as exemplified by *Vulcan's Fame* – represents another positive note, although Forlorn's blatant dearth of originality is a major pitfall that needs to be addressed. [6] DAVE LING

HEWHOCANNOT-BENAMED

SUNDAY SCHOOL MASSACRE
MVD



Dwarves man goes for short and curls

GIVEN that Dwarves frontman Blag Dahlia has put out everything from bluegrass to country albums in his solo guise, you could be forgiven for thinking that the band's masked and frequently naked lunatic guitarist might be a secret classical music fan. Thankfully not. In his first solo work, Mr Hewho hasn't strayed far from the Dwarves template, making an album that stands toe to toe with any of their best. From the opening punk blast of *Happy Suicide* to the near genius of *Motorboating* it's wall-to-wall classics, or as the Dwarves would put it, 'Nothing but hits, bitch!' Not bad for a bloke who was reported dead 13 years ago! [7] MÖRAT

TRUE OR FALSE?

36CF vocalist Brock Lindow and Enslaved's world-renowned angler, Gato Bekkevold, have long had a bitter fishing rivalry.

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False, although Brock is also known for his trawling escapades on the high seas.

QUICK & PAINLESS

A SHORT LOOK AT THIS MONTH'S OTHER OFFERINGS

DOGS FOR BREAKFAST

ROSE LANE WAS TUCKER'S GIRLFRIEND
SUBSOUND



Oh, scene kid: why don't you ask these Italians how to do metalcore?

You might learn how to synthesise the rocking despondency of Unsane with Botch's angry algebra and keep the stolen At The Gates melodies at bay. You'll be better for it. Really. [8] CONNIE GORDON

GYPSYHAWK

PATIENCE & PERSEVERANCE
CREATOR DESTROYER



A Californian band who dream of being Thin Lizzy – mixed with a little Lynyrd Skynyrd. The

production is flimsier than a papier mâché statue and the vocals are rather anemic, but the well-played, well-constructed songs show promise. [6] MALCOLM DOME

HELSTAR

RISE FROM THE GRAVE
METAL BLADE



OVERLAIN with the shrill warbling of James Rivera, these Texans meld complex power metal

with raging thrash. *Rising From The Grave* pulls together remastered versions of 1988's *A Distant Thunder* and 1989's *Nosferatu* with a live DVD. [6] DAVE LING

KILLING JOKE

IN EXCELSIS EP
NASCOT



KILLING Joke's first release in over four years is initially disarming, the title track's anthemic

splendour lacking some of Jaz Coleman and co's lascivious apocalyptic edge. But *Endgame* brings back KJ's classic bristle, while *Kali Yuga*'s massive, march-into-the-beyond stomp and *The Ghost Of Ladbrooke Grove*'s exiled dub burn with a transformative fire that hasn't dimmed for over 30 years. [8] JONATHAN SELZER

IMICUS

ANIMAL FACTORY
TRANSCEND



Londoners' debut takes the 90s forward

THIS debut justifies Imicus's appearances on some of Britain's most prestigious stages over the last 18 months, evoking the rumbling bass and downtuned riffs of the nu metal era, and

the despairing melodies and idiosyncratic vocal lines of early Tool. *Visceral* kicks off with plenty of stomp and bounce before shifting into a stirring chorus and dark, cascading bridge. *Veiled Odema*'s chimed polyrhythms are finished off by a ferocious beatdown, while *An Isolation Dawn*'s haunting passages are on par with Opeth and Katatonia. Unfortunately the structure of big riffs leading into familiar choruses brings a slight similarity to proceedings, but overall this fails to dampen *Animal Factory*'s surprising quality. [7] ADAM REES

IMPENDING DOOM

THERE WILL BE VIOLENCE
FACEDOWN



Atmospheric, enlightening Christian death

ONCE again, Impending Doom prove that Christian metal doesn't have to suck. The Californians' third album isn't quite as mesmerisingly violent as last year's *The Serpent*

Servant, with too much time spent on atmospheric and tension-building at the expense of brain-melting levels of sonic misery, but it'll still give much better-known USDM acts cause for concern. *The Son Is Mine* showcases ID's talent for blending crushing riffs with breakneck tempo changes. In fact, the songwriting is so evolved that the presence of Tim Lambesis on *Orphans* is more of a distraction than a bonus. God (literally?) knows, there's enough talent here without roping in unnecessary guests. [7] JOEL McIVER

IN MOURNING

MONOLITH
PULVERISED



Stirring prog metal from Sweden

TWO years on from their well-received debut, *Shrouded Divine*, In Mourning have turned up the heat right across the board. Their studied variant on now-voguish progressive death metal stylings is executed with typically Swedish precision and skill, benefitting from above-average songwriting. The band's fluid, atmospheric fusion of brutality and melody makes Opeth comparisons inevitable, as does the splendid artwork, courtesy of the prolific Travis Smith. There's a lot going on here, and the songs range from long to lengthy, but on the whole they stitch it all together with considerable skill. If *Monolith* was a stew, it'd be one made to a recipe, not just from the first half dozen items found on the shelf. [8] GREG MOFFITT

INTEGRITY

THE BLACKEST CURSE
DEATHWISH INC.



The dark side of hardcore gets darker

SOME 20 years ago, this Ohio band rattled the foundations of hardcore by fusing metal and punk with violent lyrics of hatred and they've just released the most impressive hardcore album in years. Sinister and aggressive, *Curse* is part thrash-core, part the soundtrack to a bad trip. The unpolished production ensures Dwid Hellion's vocals and Slayer-inspired pummeling remain gritty while the ominous whispers and mournful fretwork remain hauntingly crisp. The result is as enjoyable as it is unnerving, particularly on the epic *Before The VWorld Vvas Young*. Dragging us from strumming and charged solos into pools of feedback and torment, it's disorientating and hypnotic. This is Integrity in their prime. [9] NIK YOUNG

ION DISSONANCE

CURSED
BASICK



Noisecore originals get an overhaul

THOSE who remember the vibrant metal/noisecore wave of the late 90s will certainly recognise what these Montreal maulers have done with the virtual overhaul and complete blowing away of their former soulless technicality. If you remember the days of The Dillinger Escape Plan, Botch and Coalesce and love the sonic boom of Meshuggah's bass sound, chances are you'll already have a soft spot in your festering heart for tracks like *You People Are Messed Up*. And if you lament Drowningman's long-gone, lengthy songtitle sarcasm, then *We Like To Call This One – Fuck Off and After Everything That's Happened What Did You Expect* should do you well, too. [8] CONNIE GORDON



Hellyeah: "Darnit, a Bacardi Breezer does sound mighty refreshin'!"

HELLYEAH

STAMPEDE
SPINEFARM



Vinnie Paul and co get Down to action

IF you're expecting something between Pantera and Mudvayne from this so-called supergroup, then you're going to be in for a shock. While there's unquestionably a link to these giants – three of Hellyeah are associated with those bands – *Stampede* nonetheless has a groove it can call its own. The quintet's second record has more in common with early Down than anyone else. It's got the same driving Southern sludge feel, yet is never an imitation of what Phil Anselmo and co have already done. From the moment that the impressive *Cowboy* Way high-steps onto

the scene, you'll know that Hellyeah have fashioned a modern metal album, yet one with a style that also owes something to the mid-80s Bay Area thrash scene. With Chad Gray proving he can sing as well as growl, and guitarists Greg Tribbett and Tom Maxwell plundering the vaults for some of the best riffs you'll hear in 2010, the band get on a roll and stay there. Almost every track rages and rasps, but for the most part there's no sense that what you get is a succession of songs fashioned from a formula. And, just occasionally, they vary the pace. *Better Man* is a convincing power ballad, while *Stand Or Walk Away* has a darkly sedate gait. This record could do with being a couple of songs shorter but, ending with the ferocious *Order The Sun*, it's still a big step up from 2007's self-titled debut. [7] MALCOLM DOME

INFLUENCED BY:

DOWN, EXODUS, PANTERA

ALSO TRY:

PANTERA

Cowboys From Hell

ELEKTRA, 1990

DOWN

NOLA

ELEKTRA, 1995

ARMORED SAINT

La Raza

METAL BLADE, 2010

This month in history...

SUMMER 2005

"SNOW ON THE ROOF" WAS REALLY COCAINE

Mick Mars revealed that the band's classic excuse for cancelling a UK tour was not that "snow on the roof" was too heavy for the venues, but something he made up to cover Mötley Crüe's use of cocaine. "I was talking about [snorting] snow," chuckled the guitarist.

DID YOU KNOW?

Vinnie Paul built a cabana beach house on his pool deck for his Hellyeah bandmates.

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REVIEWS

ALL THE SINNERS AND WINNERS



Jamey Jasta and Kirk Windstein prove a handful

KINGDOM OF SORROW

BEHIND THE BLACKEST TEARS

RELAPSE



Hatebreed/Crowbar alliance shows its true mettle

ONE of the more satisfying all-star collaborations of late, Kingdom Of Sorrow sit exactly where you would expect them

to: at the midway point between the cranium-cracking bludgeoncore of Hatebreed and the blooze-blistered doom rock howl of Crowbar.

Although more focused and intense than their self-titled debut, *Behind The Blackest Tears* is essentially more of the sludgy but brutal same, with both Jamey Jasta and Kirk Windstein doing what they do best across a destructive arsenal of mutant Sabbath riffs and swamp-bound psychedelia. What the dynamic duo establish most

convincingly here is how KOS clearly matters just as much to them as their supposed day jobs. There is hardly a riff or vocal line that doesn't scream conviction, and songs like *Along The Road To Ruin* are plainly the equal of anything on the most recent Hatebreed and Crowbar albums. Jamey's lyrics have seldom been so excruciatingly sincere and poignant either, with the grim warnings of *From Heroes To Dust* and the heart-rending reality check of the title track hitting home like a knuckle duster to the ribcage. This is both iron fist in iron glove and gut-wrenching emotional splurge – a testament to the dedication of all concerned and a reminder that, when it comes to exploring the dark side of the human condition, heavy metal is still the ultimate flashlight. [8]

DOM LAWSON

INFLUENCED BY
CROWBAR, HATEBREED,
BLACK LABEL SOCIETY

ALSO TRY
HATEBREED
Hatebreed
ROADRUNNER, 2009

CROWBAR
Lifesblood For The Downtrodden
CANDLELIGHT, 2005

CORROSION OF CONFORMITY
In The Arms Of God
SANCTUARY, 2005

LAST RECORD I BOUGHT

Kirk Hammett Metallica



ORPHANED LAND

THE NEVER ENDING WAY OF ORWARIOR

CENTURYMEDIA

"ORPHANED Land are a progressive metal band from Israel singing about the troubles in the Middle East and they have both Jewish and Arab fans. They gave me their CD and I really like what they are doing."



JETTBLACK

GET YOUR HANDS DIRTY

SPINEFARM



UK sleaze rock with grit in its spandex

If everyone now believes that Steel Panther are the epitome of hair metal – and in a way, they are – then bands like Jettblack remind us that this music isn't just about putting tongues in

cheeks and putting on wigs. Loud, proud and full of spunk, these young Brits have the trashy, good time appeal of Silverwing, Wrathchild and Tigertailz – bands who, in the 1980s, took the glam appeal of the LA scene and gave it some British grit. Every song has that sleazy confidence of a foursome who have the attitude and aptitude to make it all sound entertaining. None of these guys are virtuosos, but with songs like *Get Your Hands Dirty* and *Two Hot Girls*, it's all about the thrust not the fuss. And these guys have got it. [7]

MALCOLM DOME

JORN

DIO
FRONTIERS



Masterplan man pays tribute to the master

IS this a hastily assembled, calculated cash-in on the death of Ronnie James Dio, or is there more to a record featuring songs associated with the late, great vocalist? Jorn is Jørn Lande, frontman of Masterplan, and not only is he a huge Dio fan, but he recorded this collection before the latter's tragic death. The Norwegian singer has carefully picked his selection. Not only do we get Dio classics, but also lesser-known songs, plus nods to Rainbow and Black Sabbath. There's also a new track, *Song For Ronnie James*, that cleverly works Ronnie's lyrics and songtitles into an air-punching ballad. Jørn does a very good job paying respects to his hero, even if ultimately this makes you want to play the originals. [7]

MALCOLM DOME

JOSIAH

PROCESSION
ELEKTROHASCH



A sturdy stoner rock swansong

COMPARED to the hackneyed state it ended up in towards the end of the 90s, much of the stoner rock of today has a real urgency and verve, as if its timeless qualities have been given a

complete overhaul. One of the UK's finest balls-out rock 'n' roll bands, Josiah seldom stray from a textbook fuzz-rock path, echoing the wilder edges of Fu Manchu's broad oeuvre and throwing a large dollop of Nebula-style psychedelic abandon into their cauldron of lumbering grooves, wah-drenched funk and wailing blues. Although this is supposedly the band's final album, *Procession* is more sharply defined than its predecessor, *No Time*, exemplified by the raucous shape-shifting of closing burnout *I Can't Seem To Find It*. [7]

DOM LAWSON

KNUT

WONDER

HYDRA HEAD



Swiss brutalists make a timely return

SWITZERLAND'S music scene doesn't always get the credit it deserves but *Cold Lake* and *Krokus* aside, the country calls consistency its home. Knut have been bouncing between Coalesce-inspired mayhem and ambient noise washes for over 12 years and *Wonder* is testament to their boundary-crashing history. *Lemmings* and *Calamity* are groovy yet hideously noisy, hammer-on/pull-off workouts with stutter-step drumming and cliff-diver vocals. The heavily textured instrumental *Ultralight Backpacking* is a skin-searing dirge and the band round out the acerbic assault with some wickedly soothing post-metal sway. Another excellent and well-rounded showing. Now you lot, show them some love! [8]

CONNIE GORDON

KRAKOW

MONOLITH
INDIE/WHITE ELEPHANT



Epic Nordic doom and gloom

DESPITE the name, Krakow hail from Norway, a country not known for its stoner/doom metal heritage. But there's no questioning the band's credentials and *Monolith* is a suitably gloomy experience, with the dual vocals ranging from embittered rasping growls to soulful clean singing, courtesy of members René Misje and Frode Kilvik. Drawing upon epic post-rock melancholy and crushing riffs, Krakow reveal a debt to acts such as Isis, yet despite the obvious concern for atmosphere and dynamics (the final self-titled track even hints at Earth's *Hex* album with its lonely ambience), the distorted guitars and sludgy, dreamy movements make comparisons to Kyuss and Sleep just as relevant. [7]

DAYAL PATTERSON

THE LAST FELONY

TOO MANY HUMANS

LIFEFORCE



Eclectic Canadians get too PC

ALTHOUGH the most brutal thing to emerge from Canada since Robert Pickton, The Last Felony suffer from the same problem as those man-child PC World sales assistants: you come in looking for some blastbeat-heavy death-core, and you find it with opener *We Are Future Housing Developments For Maggots*, but before you've had a moment to take it in you're over-eagerly offered added grooves, half-price beatdowns, brief death metal moments (the astonishing *No One Would Care If You Died*) and cluster bombs of melon-twisting technical virtuosity (*Too Many Humans*) – until you're reduced to collapsing in the aisle, clinging to the thought that you should have bought the Despised Icon album you came in for. [6]

TOBY COOK

MASTERPLAN

TIME TO BE KING

AFM



Regal power metallers stretch out

REUNITED with original vocalist Jørn Lande after a three-year absence, mediocrity was never an option for Masterplan's fourth studio album. As one of the major melodic power metal players, its title also needed to be a statement of intent, and that's exactly what it is. Jørn, selected by Heaven & Hell for their recent High Voltage festival tribute to Ronnie James Dio, has an immaculate, commanding voice and the Norwegian puts it to perfect use throughout this invigorating, classy album. A flavour of Whitesnake-esque stadium rock and the ghost of Queen have been summed to propel the influence of guitarist Grapow's former band Helloween into breathtakingly refreshing areas. [8]

DAVE LING

TRUE OR FALSE?

Although Kirk Windstein is heavily associated with New Orleans' sludge sound, he was actually born in the UK.

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True! He was born in Middlessex, in southern England in 1965.

QUICK & PAINLESS

A SHORT LOOK AT THIS MONTH'S OTHER OFFERINGS

LAVOTCHKIN

WIDOW COUNTRY
SHARK CITY RECORDS



ONE of UKHC's best-kept secrets, Lavotchkin should soon find themselves ill-fit for

that category. *Widow Country* is quite possibly the most honest and violent mix of chaotic and infuriated, yet articulate and impassioned noise since Converge's *When Forever Comes Crashing*. [8]

TOBY COOK

PRIMAL FEAR

LIVE IN THE USA
FRONTIERS



A WELL-recorded documentation of Primal Fear's touring campaign for the 16.6: *Before The*

Devil Knows You're Dead album, *Live...* includes many of the German band's finest songs, standing tall and proud as an appetising slab of melodic power metal. It's also available on DVD. [8]

DAVE LING

JAMIE MALLENDER

RETURN TO BASS
CORABY



JAMIE Mallender is the bassist of The Headless Cross, fronted by ex-Black Sabbath singer Tony

Martin. His debut solo release represents a confusing and unsatisfying mix of styles, from metal and progressive rock to jazz-fusion and funk. He's a skilled player, but this is stupefyingly dull. [4]

DAVE LING

WAR FROM A HARLOT'S MOUTH/ BURNING SKIES

SPLIT EP
LIFEFORCE



THESE German and British metal quintets already share deranged brutal attitudes and a

drummer, so why not an EP? The main tracks are quality, and the two swapped cover versions are a wickedly clever touch. The joint GLC-style pisstake *Trife Life* is a step too far, though. [7]

NIK YOUNG

This month in history...

SEPTEMBER 1996

TYPE O NEGATIVE
OCTOBER RUST

ROADRUNNER

TON'S third studio album puts their previous output into the shade, suggesting that frontman Pete Steele may well become known for his day job and not showing his erect donger to Playgirl. Dense and mid-paced yet grindingly insistent, *October Rust* could be the soundtrack for a dark, gothic movie. [4/5]

PAUL HENDERSON

MISS LAVA

BLUES FOR THE DANGEROUS MILES
RAGING PLANET



They're opening for Slash, ironically

THE cover of this album shows four tiny figures walking along a road of semen, which is flowing out of a giant vagina.

Now, we've all been curious about walking inside a five-storey-high vulva, but this artistic folly doesn't bode well for the quality of this Portuguese hard rock debut album. This only deepens when you open the accompanying booklet and see that they look like characters from *Lord Of The Rings* after taking part in a record-breaking bukkake contest. The music is bog-standard, over-produced, Danzig-leaning blues rock that will be taken seriously by absolutely no one but their long-suffering girlfriends and those who think Queen featuring Paul Rogers is a 'rocking' idea. [3]

JOHN DORAN

MISTWEAVER

TALES FROM THE GRAVE
CASKET



Mournful, symphonic eeriness

WITH a background steeped in doom and death metal, these Spaniards have opened out their sound, taking in the more expansive areas of early My Dying Bride and Anathema. While

Mistweaver's previous three records have been promising, this one has begun to fulfil the potential, albeit still short of being essential. There's a sense of foreboding throughout, helped by the dark atmosphere created by the keyboards. This is clear on *Sons Of Darkness* and *Voices From The Grave*, with Raul Weaver growling like a rabid dog. Nothing here is unique, but that's not really the point. The album's enjoyable extreme metal hokum, with closing track, *A Madman's Epitaph*, proving mournfully triumphant. [6]

MALCOLM DOME

MOTHER-UNIT

BRAIN-MASSAGE
STICKMAN



Dutch rockers get psych in the head

MOTHER-UNIT, a Dutch outfit featuring guitarist Bertus Fridaël, formerly of 35007, don't fear throwing together seemingly incompatible strains of outsider music in order to achieve psychedelic effect. The title track opens with a repetitive, minimalistic glockenspiel pattern, but this is only to lull you into a false sense of security. It explodes into a heavy, repetitive, acid metal riff whose rock primitivism makes the sturdy frame from which to hang all sorts of electronic whooshes, whirrs and sundry deep space FX. And if the moniker and album title suggest Krautrock, then so does the music. When the album breaks down to its groove, it is motorik and speedy, the missing link between Can and Hawkwind. A real trip. [8]

JOHN DORAN

PEARL

LITTLE IMMACULATE WHITE FOX
POWERAGE



Meat Loaf's daughter finds her voice

GROWING up must have been tough in Pearl Aday's house. Daughter of Meat Loaf, it must have been tough to rebel against a rock star and just imagine the shouting matches. On her debut album she's called in a few favours: hubby Scott Ian plays, as does Jerry Cantrell and Ted Nugent, but it's Pearl's impressive rasp that endures. It's apt that Janis Joplin inspired her name as she's got a similar set of pipes, gutsy and raw. If there's one complaint it's that the material sometimes wanes while Pearl keeps on working. She shows admirable restraint too on the downbeat *My Heart Isn't In It*, proving she can do both light and shade, while on *Broken White* she simply tears the roof right off. [7]

PHILIP WILDING

THE PERFECT CRIME

EVERYTHING ELSE CAN WAIT
SPEECHLESS



Daring debut from post-hardcore trio

CAMBRIDGESHIRE'S The Perfect Crime have swung for the fences on their debut album, melding ambitious song structures with the melodic sensibilities of emotional hardcore.

Frontman Adam Mortaro's soulful vocals and lyrics carry the songs from one slow-burning melody to another, never once adhering to clichés or convention. The opening burst of *Hailstones* and *Harlequin* add some welcome crunch, while *Quietly Confident* is a proud statement of intent. Though TPC have an ear for a good tune, a lack of defining moments results in many of the verses and choruses, and at times entire songs, blending into one another, even if as a whole, *Everything Else...* is a convincing, well-crafted endeavour. [7]

ADAM REES



Lamb Of God threaten to leave you black and blue

LAMB OF GOD

HOURLASS
SONY



Blastbeats and past-beats from Richmond warriors

A THREE-disc retrospective that offers newcomers to the world of Virginia's finest a comprehensive trawl through a sturdy and singular back catalogue, *Hourglass* looks great and sounds monstrous. On the other hand, it's not entirely clear why devoted fans should be overly interested. With two discs of previously released songs taken from LOG's six studio albums (*Burn The Priest* included) and a single disc of rare and unreleased material (most of which is palpably and inevitably inferior to anything on the first two discs) providing the only real incentive to buy, there is a strong whiff of cynicism about the

whole thing, and it's hard to imagine the band themselves being particularly eager to endorse it. The music itself is fantastic, of course. LOG have become one of the premier metal bands of the modern age because, like their most obvious forebears, they have a sound that is as distinctive as it is familiar, timely and brutal. They are also fine songwriters, as emphasised here by a glut of anthems like *Black Label*, *11th Hour*, *Laid To Rest* and *Blacken The Cursed Sun* – modern metal classics all. And what they lack in variety (brilliant as it was, *Wrath*

wasn't a dramatic departure from its predecessors), they more than make up for in sheer intensity and passion. Diehards will snap this up regardless, but everyone else should approach with caution. [6]

DOM LAWSON

INFLUENCED BY:
SLAYER, TESTAMENT, PANTERA

ALSO TRY:
A LIFE ONCE LOST

Iron Gag

FERRET, 2007

TESTAMENT

The Gathering

SPITFIRE, 1999

PANTERA

The Great Southern Trendkill

EASTWEST, 1996

DID YOU KNOW?

Randy Blythe has a drunkenly tattooed Misfit logo on his hip that looks like a penis and two testicles.

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REVIEWS

ALL THE SINNERS AND WINNERS

Saxon: no grandstanding here



SAXON

HEAVY METAL THUNDER – THE MOVIE

COOLHEAD PRODUCTIONS



A candid insight into the lords of NWOBHM

AS if Saxon needed any further canonisation, this excellent documentary celebrates three decades of British bulldog spirit and some of the finest metal anthems ever written. That a

streetfighting gang from the wrong side of the tracks could crawl from the garbage-strewn gutters of 1970s England, take on the world and live to tell the tale says a fuckload about the mountains you

can conquer if you stick to your guns and keep your eyes on the prize. What marks this film out from most other biographical material on the band is the participation of original members Steve Dawson and Graham Oliver, both

of whom departed beneath clouds of acrimony in 1986 and 1994 respectively. Their insights are illuminating, particularly as the overall focus is largely on what the band achieved together, not on the petty politics that threatened to tear them apart. The level-headed perspective offered by David Poxon, the band's manager during their initial rise to fame, is equally fascinating, and overall this is an even-handed rendering of a complex tale refreshingly free from partisan grandstanding. Revelations involving groupies and drugs may raise a few eyebrows

INFLUENCED BY
AC/DC, BLACK SABBATH, DEEP PURPLE

ALSO TRY
IRON MAIDEN

Flight 666

EMI, 2009

ANVIL

The Story Of Anvil

UNIVERSAL, 2009

METALLICA

Some Kind Of Monster

PARAMOUNT, 2004

given Saxon's long-standing love affair with a cup of tea and an early night, but with Lars Ulrich and Lemmy lining up to pay tribute, the movie's ultimate message is that it's the music that matters. [8] GREG MOFFITT

ROSETTA

A DETERMINISM OF MORALITY

TRANSLATION LOSS



Post-metal that refuses to lift off

ROSETTA have shown much disdain for being labelled post-metal. On this evidence, that would be like Limp Bizkit getting prissy about being called nu metal. It's obvious that Rosetta

have suckled bountifully from the Neur-Isis teats, so why get so precious about it? Rosetta don't come remotely close to hitting the highs set by genre behemoths like Cult Of Luna, but at least they're not Pelican. The trouble is, their record just doesn't go anywhere, and there's essentially nothing to set it apart from the over-abundant post-metal smorgasbord. Rosetta have 'humorously' described their music as metal for astronauts. If that's the case, they've probably met some really frazzled astronauts. [5]

DANIEL CAIRNS

RUINED SOUL

MY DYING DAY

SUICIDE



Pristine melodic metal, minus the passion

FANS of melodic death metal might like this Gothenburg one-man project – albeit plus a dozen or so guests, including Matias Kupiainen (Stratovarius) and Jonas Kjellgren

(Scar Symmetry). Guitarist Johnny Johansson has crafted a crisp record that partly makes up with hooks and musical dexterity what it lacks in nuts; no one could accuse Ruined Soul of sounding particularly threatening or original, but it does sound like they spent a lot of time working on their scales. *Death Gives New Life*, a thrashfest like Cronos used to make, is a highlight, and it's interesting to hear the diversions into sub-extreme, groovy territory in *Rivers Of Blood*, but otherwise *My Dying Day* fails to grip. [6]

JOEL McIVER

SASQUATCH

III

SMALL STONE



Retro-rockers with forward momentum

AH, the convoluted world of stoner rock, where doom and psych can so often clash, crash and burn. However, this Los Angeles trio get it right – almost. Sasquatch's third album takes a while

to get into gear, the first three songs sounding rushed and a little bleary, never giving this lot a chance to get into their stride. But things pick up as soon as the six-minute *Pull Me Under* rears its tousled head with a show of patiently summoned, sensual power. Finally, it all starts to make sense, coalescing in a welter of early 70s American rock (Mountain, Grand Funk) and late 80s groove (Soundgarden, King's X). The rest of the album blows past with the accomplishment of a young Monster Magnet. It's substance over style. [7]

MALCOLM DOME

SONIC SYNDICATE

WE RULE THE NIGHT

NUCLEAR BLAST



Swedish metalcore giants go soft

LOSING a singer can be disastrous, but it has fuelled Sonic Syndicate with fresh passion. Two years after *Love And Other Disasters* mixed metalcore with

Scandinavian darkness, *We Rule The Night* steers them in a far broader direction. Those big guitars are ever-present as are massive choruses, but British newcomer Nathan Biggs's vocals lend a cleaner, more accessible sound which gives glossy sheen that will frustrate some and skewer others. From *Turn It Up's* pounding refrains to the infectiousness of *Burn This City*, *We Rule...* is a brave step. Oh yeah, there's even an arm-waving ballad, *My Own Life*. Sell-outs to some, new heroes to others, Sonic Syndicate could be primed for the big time. [7]

NATASHA SCHARF

STILL ON THE STEREO

OZZY OSBOURNE

SCREAM

SONY/EMI

SOME may have questioned Ozzy's replacement of talismanic guitarist Zakk Wylde, but with Gus G at the helm, *Scream* hasn't just proved to have a rejuvenating effect on the legendary Black Sabbath frontman, it's his best album for nigh-on 20 years. Focused, heavy and bursting with hook-laden urgency, Ozzy's latest serves up a full strike against the doubters.

RETURN TO EARTH

AUTOMATA

METAL BLADE



Enterprising heaviosity from New Jersey

IT'S unlikely that *Star Trek's* Borg listen to anything other than an incessant binary drone, but if they did listen to music they'd probably listen to Return To Earth who, in the 50-odd minutes of *Automata*, assimilate just about every genre of music know to man. Occasionally resembling the more morose and synth-heavy moments of NIN, yet with almost post-hardcore guitar sequences – and even finding room for ethereal, violin-suffused piano passages – *Automata* is as much of a headfuck as you'd want without taking poisoned amphetamines. Few will be surprised that Chris Pennie (ex-Dillinger Escape Plan) lurks behind the kit as his unique polyrhythms beat out what's left of your resolve. Resistance is futile. [8]

TOBY COOK

RUSH

BEYOND THE LIGHTED STAGE DVD

ZOE VISION



Flight 666 makers get lost in prog

THIS well-intended documentary is conflicted about which audience to serve. Vintage material, much of it unique, will appeal to longtime Rush fans, but generalising band history for a secular audience, filmmakers Sam Dunn and Scott McFadyen (*Flight 666*, *Metal: A Heabanger's Journey*) occasionally fail to elaborate beyond basic familiarity. A bonus disc reveals more about the dynamics of a near 40-year partnership, so it's strange that those scenes never made the cut. It's a visually vibrant documentary, doing an extraordinary job of defining the *what* of Rush; in key instances it lacks both the *why* and a compelling narrative that does this most mercurial of bands full justice. [6]

ROGER LOTRING

SVÖLK

SVÖLK

TUBA



Nordic rockers with a wonky compass

DEVIATING from the icy path trudged by so many of their fellow countrymen, this Norwegian quintet churn a fuzzy hybrid of classic rock and metal. With its stomping heavy stoner vibe, *52* makes a great opener and we're off to the races with Pepper Keenan and James Hetfield in tow. Oh wait, no we're not. *This Is It* (which isn't it, as it turns out) chucks the Southern vibe right out the window, lurching between borderline thrash and neither-here-nor-there 80s metal. It's a pattern that persists throughout, a frustrating identity crisis for a band who clearly have promise aplenty. When it works, it's smooth as a shot of finest bourbon, but their constant vacillation does them no favours at all. [6]

GREG MOFFITT

REVIEWED NEXT MONTH... THE ACACIA STRAIN/MURDERDOLLS/THE SWORD

Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding reckon the number of the beast, for it is the number of a decent album; and it is a review-score above six.

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SLASHERAMA



The UK's Olympic construction effort had missed the deadline



Wacken 2068 was another washout

RELIQS FROM THE WRECKAGE

FILMS

PREDATORS

CERT: 15

IN CINEMAS NOW

ACTING as a kind of sequel to the game-changing 1987 original (thankfully ignoring the events of *Predator 2* and the questionable *Aliens Versus Predator* spin-offs) once again the heart-thumping,

flesh-ripping action takes place in a remote jungle, where a group of anti-heroes have been dropped – literally – into the centre of a deadly hunt. Adrien Brody and (Michelle Rodriguez wannabe) Alice Braga lead a hit-and-miss ensemble cast (including a weird cameo from Laurence Fishburne) on

BY KAT HALSTEAD

a tense, action-packed journey, ever aware of the dark, brooding presence of the bloodthirsty *Predators*. Producer Robert Rodriguez (*Sin City*, *Planet Terror*) leaves events in the hands of Hungarian director Nimród Antal (*Vacancy*), who ensures this is a ferocious sci-fi thriller for fans and virgins alike. [8]



THE CRAZIES

CERT: 15

OUT ON DVD/BLU-RAY NOW

WORD of mouth for this movie spread like a raging infection after its cinema release earlier this year and, for once, it totally lives up to the hype. Set against the familiar backdrop of smalltown America, this remake of zombie guru George A Romero's 1973 horror will have you shit-scared from the first sign of trouble to the eerie end. When a bizarre disease turns the locals into raving, murderous loons, the sheriff (Timothy Olyphant) looks set to save the day. That is, until the US military decide to wipe out the entire population – just to be sure. Soon it's every man for himself in a gory, terrifying fight for survival with some genuine pant-filling scares. [7]



PSYCHO

CERT: 15

OUT ON BLU-RAY NOW

A LITTLE bit of culture never killed anyone, but cross-dressing psycho Norman Bates (Anthony Perkins) certainly did in one of the most iconic horror movies ever made. Brought to terrifying life in ultra-techie high definition, director Alfred Hitchcock's 1960 classic tells the story of office worker Marion Crane (Marion Leigh), who stops at the infamous Bates Motel after going on the run with a big fat wad of company money. Next she's being romanced by the creepy proprietor, who turns out to be more of a mummy's boy than she can handle... Best bit? The slash-happy shower scene of course, which is truly horrific in HD! [9]

COOL SHIT

THE ATOMIC CLOCK

GENE HOGLAN

WWW.HOGLANINDUSTRIES.COM

THE drummer for Death, Strapping Young Lad and more, Gene Hoglan has clearly never taken proper lessons, but can still kick ass. So for aspiring metal drummers who don't really buy into the poncey, over-thought faction of extreme drumming, this DVD comes as a relief.

LENORE: WEDGIES

ROMAN DIRGE

TITAN BOOKS

CUTESY and macabre, this collection of comic book vignettes finds our dead heroine finding ever more inadvertently inventive ways to maim as many cute little critters as possible with her customary, never-quite-comprehending charm. From head-exploding tea parties to disastrous Easter bunny substitutes, this goth girl fave is a velvet glove cast in viscera.

NO MAN'S WORLD: BLACK HAND GANG

PAT KELLIEER

ABADDON BOOKS

AN utterly apeshit tale about a battalion of World War I soldiers who get accidentally transported to an alien planet and have to fight various beasts, mysterious threats and similar nonsense. Imagine the bastard son of *Starship Troopers* and *All Quiet On The Western Front* and you're there.

SONY XPERIA X10 MINI

SONY ERICSSON

KEEPING the feel of its larger sibling's interface, but with every detail carefully redesigned for its compact dimensions – including the innovative tiled Timescape view – the X10 is the world's smallest Android touchscreen phone, packing a 5 megapixel camera and excellent music player into a phone whose power belies its snug size.



SCOTT PILGRIM VS THE WORLD (AUG 13), THE LAST AIRBENDER (AUG 13), THE HUMAN CENTIPEDE (AUG 20), LONDON FRIGHTFEST (AUGUST 26-30), TEKKEN (SEP 1)

ALL THE BEST DIGITAL PLAYGROUNDS THIS MONTH!

GAMES

BY GILLEN McALLISTER



Blur: insane in the fast lane

BLUR

ACTIVISION

XBOX 360 / PS3

BLUR should be an awkward crossbreed, mixing realistic cars and locales with colourful car-damaging power-ups, yet developer Bizarre turns it into a unique purebred,

with tough tracks and AI that will interest racing fans across the grid. Even if you're not a car nut, unlocking bigger and better rides is worth putting in the hours for as you climb the ranks, with challenges in both single-player and multiplayer mode. This is a *Modern Warfare* 2-level

of addiction on four wheels. Additionally you can set and receive challenges, with the game updating any new ones sent by friends every time you log on online. The result is an ever-escalating pissing contest. Prepare to burn along the racetrack all night long. [9]



UFC UNDISPUTED 2010

THQ

XBOX 360 / PS3

WARNING: trying to learn the slew of button combinations the UFC tutorial throws at you may make your brain seep out of your nose. Stick with it, as UFC is a cracking title, merging arcade-style punch-ups with deep and complex strategic gameplay. It's glued together with a shit-ton of options, from quickfire exhibition matches to a huge Create A Fighter attached to an anti-social career mode. It might make those evenings between gigs redundant as you work out to upgrade stats and learn new moves. [8]



RED DEAD REDEMPTION

ROCKSTAR

XBOX 360 / PS3

IF you decide to continue plugging away as a space marine rather than strapping on a Stetson this weekend, you're missing out on something special. Capturing the era of the gritty cinematic Western and evoking the spirit of Clint Eastwood, *Grand Theft Auto* developer Rockstar pulls no punches in carving its own telling of the closing days of the last true frontier. And you don't have to ride off into the sunset come the closing credits; a robust online multiplayer returns you to the open plains and lets you saddle up with friends in a variety of game modes. Saddle up. [9]

NEXT MONTH...

RESIDENT EVIL: AFTERLIFE/JONAH HEX/APB/MAFIA II/STARCRRAFT II: WINGS OF LIBERTY/BLACK SABBATH AND THE RISE OF HEAVY METAL MUSIC/DEADPOOL CORPS: PRELUDE

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METAL DETECTOR

GETTING THE KNOWLEDGE

Soilwork (left to right): Sven Karlsson, Dirk Verbeuren, Ola Flink, Sylvain Coudret, Bjorn 'Speed' Strid, Peter Wichers



SOILWORK are often overshadowed by their peers In Flames and Dark Tranquillity. Their contribution to melodic death metal, however, shouldn't be overlooked. Words: Dom Lawson

Originally formed in Helsingborg, Sweden by guitarist Peter Wichers and vocalist Bjorn 'Speed' Strid in 1995, Soilwork headed the second wave of melodic death metal that emerged in the wake of the explosion of groundbreaking bands from Gothenburg. In Flames and Dark Tranquillity among them, a few years earlier. Taking that scene's increasingly popular blueprint and adding the crushing grooves and progressive flair of bands like Pantera, Meshuggah and Strapping Young Lad, the Swedes swiftly evolved into a fervently fresh and distinctive creative force, dazzling the European metal firmament with their 1998 debut, *Steelbath Suicide*. The follow-up, *The Chainheart Machine*, marked a substantial step forward and further cemented their reputation as Swedish metal's brightest hopes, but it was a move to Nuclear Blast and the release of *A Predator's Portrait* in 2001 that turned them into genuine contenders. Hailed as a brave new dawn in melodic DM, the album showcased a newfound maturity and complexity in the band's sound and duly garnered the patronage of Judas Priest's Rob

Halford, who cited the album as his favourite of 2001. A year later, Soilwork teamed up with producer Devin Townsend for the even stronger and more adventurous *Natural Born Chaos*, a masterpiece of thunderous intricacy and melodic bite that had a significant impact in the US, not least among the nascent metalcore fraternity, many of whom owe an undeniable debt to the Swedish band.

Never afraid to take a risk, Soilwork became more accessible and incorporated some alternative rock influences for *Figure Number Five* in 2003, before changing tack for the epic aggression of 2005's *Stabbing The Drama*. Exasperated by their gruelling touring schedule, Peter left Soilwork at the end of that year, leaving his colleagues to make the patchy but diverse *Sworn To A Great Divide* which met mixed reviews in 2007. Happily, Peter returned in 2009 and a now-revamped lineup (guitarist Ola Frenning was replaced by Sylvain Coudret in 2008) recently unveiled their eighth album, *The Panic Broadcast*, which has been heralded as a blistering return to form. Still one of the most popular and daring Swedish metal bands, Soilwork's rise to glory is far from over.

FANBOY!

Nathan J. Biggs
SONIC SYNDICATE

"I'm a huge Soilwork fan! It's funny, now I'm based out here in Sweden, and hanging out with people from the Swedish DM scene, I've met Speed a few times, and it's weird because growing up he was one of my idols! *Stabbing The Drama* is their best record; it's Swedish melodic DM at its absolute best. It has some absolutely huge hooks, and the vocals are insanely good - which is what I'm really into. *Steelbath Suicide* is pretty raw, but I'm a genuine fan and I can honestly say there's not a poor album in their catalogue."



NATURAL BORN CHAOS

NUCLEAR BLAST, 2002

Adventures at the cutting edge

AFTER three albums that had placed them at the forefront of Europe's flourishing melodic DM scene, Soilwork needed to step up to a higher gear and really justify their growing reputation when it came to album number four. Their sound had increasingly demanded a bolder, more wide-screen approach, so the decision to use the inestimable talents of producer, musician and all-round demented genius Devin Townsend seemed both logical and inspired. It was recorded with the Canadian at the helm at producer Fredrik Nordstrom's Studio Fredman (in Gothenburg) in the autumn of 2001. *Natural Born Chaos* was the first Soilwork album to feature keyboard player Sven Karlsson, who'd replaced Carlos Del Olmo Holberg earlier that year, and also features a guest appearance from Swedish prog notable Mattias IA Elkhundh (leader of the band Freak Kitchen) on *No More Angels*. But all distractions aside, this was the moment that songwriting became king of Soilwork's world, as the melodic strength of the past collided gloriously with a newfound confidence in the band's progressive instincts, all orchestrated and balanced with typical style and intelligence by the mercurial Devin. Kicking off with the hook-laden

MUST HAVE



Follow *The Hollow*. *Natural Born Chaos* covers similar ground to what In Flames were doing at the same time, but with considerably more sci-fi sparkle and a greater degree of intricacy ensuring that the Helsingborg crew stood proudly apart from their forebears. The fluid and inventive riffs and solos of Peter Wichers and co-guitarist Ola Frenning brought depth and subtlety to what are, at their core, pretty straightforward metal songs with big choruses, but it was the churning grooves and thrilling momentum of immaculate anthems like *Mindfields* and *The Flameout* that made this record such an immediate hit with headbangers across the planet. Meanwhile, Devin himself popped up with some backing vocals on the impactful bluster of *Black Star Deceiver* and endearingly hectic album closer *Soilworker's Song Of The Damned* ('Live for the moment!/Get killed for the thrill!'). Pressure soaked up. Classic delivered. Job done.

BEST TRACK: *Black Star Deceiver*

THE STUFF

All the collectables from your fave bands.

Remarkably for a metal band who have just released their eighth studio album, Soilwork have thus far resisted the urge to produce a DVD of any description, which means that if you want to get a substantial visual fix you will need to visit YouTube and check out all of the Swedes' promo clips online. Relatively prolific in this area, Soilwork have produced videos for *Exile* and *20 More Miles* from 2007's *Sworn To A Great Divide*, *Nerve* and the title track from 2005's *Stabbing The Drama*, *As We Speak* from 2002's *Natural Born Chaos* and *Light The Torch* and, most notably, *Rejection Role* from 2003's *Figure Number Five*. The last of these features a memorable guest

appearance from In Flames, who attempt to engage Soilwork in a snowball fight.

Frankly, we've seen more convincing ventriloquist acts, but then these people are musicians, not actors. Bless 'em. Devoted fans will not struggle to find Soilwork merchandise online. A wide variety of shirts and other items are currently available, and it seems highly likely that even more will hit the shops when the band begin touring in earnest in support of *The Panic Broadcast* later this year. There are posters, of course.



NUCLEAR BLAST, 2001

THE most significant transitional point in the evolution of Soilwork's sound, their third album saw front-man Bjorn 'Speed' Strid venturing into melodic territory for the first time, mixing powerful clean vocals with his trademark harsh bellow. Musically, too, the Swedes were outgrowing their melodic DM roots and taking a risk or two. Songs like *Bastard Chain* and *Neurotica Rampage* boasted twists and turns alongside the more expected bursts of speed and trad metal histrionics, while futuristic keyboards added sonic depth and a hint of forward-thinking intensity. Memorably championed by Rob Halford, *A Predator's Portrait* also benefited from the presence of Opeth's Mikael Åkerfeldt, whose vocal contribution to its bombastic title track brought a welcome dash of underground credibility to the whole enterprise. Effortlessly classy, Soilwork were stretching out in style.

LISTENABLE 2000

FOLLOWING swiftly on from the precocious fire'n'fury of their debut, *The Chainheart Machine* painted Soilwork as a band who had found their feet and were ready to get their heads down for some serious long-distance ground-pounding. Still firmly in the melodic DM camp, the band asserted their supremacy by simply having better songs than any of their peers could muster, with the likes of *Bulletbeast*, *Possessing The Angels* and the timeless title track – still a regular fixture at Soilwork shows – showering the listener with irresistible hooks and plenty of infectious aggression. Ostensibly a concept album, this confirmed that Soilwork were serious contenders and became one of the most influential albums of its time, its hearty blend of harmony leads and boisterous brutality inspiring everyone from Killswitch Engage to Sonic Syndicate.

WILD CARD
SOIL WORK



STAYING THE DRAMA

NUCLEAR BLAST, 2005

KEEN to reassure fans who had been a little unnerved by the glossy simplicity of 2003's *Figure Number Five*, the sixth Soilwork album was a partial return to the band's heavier early material, but the enormous melodies and post-Pantera swagger that had been subtly seeping into their sound remained in tact. In fact, this was the moment when Soilwork learned how to balance their roots with their lust for experimenting, and on songs like the fist-pumping *One With The Flies* and the emotionally gripping *The Crestfallen*, they sounded like a band that had finally pinned down their true *modus operandi*. Ranging from the rousing majesty of the title track to the white-knuckle sprint of *Black Eye Halo*, *Stabbing...* was diverse and destructive; the perfect riposte to the countless new American bands that were flagrantly borrowing Soilwork's ideas.

NUCLEAR BLAST, 2003

CLEARLY fancying their chances of emulating In Flames' international success, Soilwork took what many would regard as the necessary compositional plunge on their fifth album, incorporating a touch of nu metal groove and a large amount of production polish into their sound. They seemed to take their foot off the progressive metal accelerator, resulting in an album that was all about three-minute money shots and huge hooks; the sizzling lead work and interplanetary mould-smashing of old receding into the background. The experiment appalled some but delighted even more and it led to the Swedes making major in-roads into the US market while enjoying an enhanced profile at home too. Nowhere near as lightweight as the cynics would claim, *Figure Number Five* remains a mischievous anomaly in the band's catalogue, but an undeniably well-executed one nonetheless.

AVOIR

SOILWERK

NUCLEAR BLAST, 2007

REFUSING to slow their pace after the departure of Peter Dinklage, Soilwork delivered their seventh album less than two years later, with new guitarist Daniel Antonsson in tow. This was another brave step away from the norm, but unlike *Figure Number Five*, the end result came across as schizophrenic. It had strong moments, not least the bombastic title track, the vicious *The Pittsburgh Syndrome* and the Depeche Mode-like *Light Discovering Darkness*, but Peter's absence left a gaping hole that was only partly filled by the numerous kitchen sinks that guitarist and co-producer Ola Frenning had hopefully lobbed into the mix. It is perhaps significant that Peter returned in 2009, just as Ola departed citing "musical differences", and that normal service has been resumed on this year's superb *The Panic Broadcast*.

plus there's everything from pewter belt buckles and dogtag necklaces through to a particularly awesome striped 'girly tee' that can be obtained and worn with pride by anyone with the cash and the inclination. Aside from his day-to-day Soilwork duties, frontman Bjorn 'Speed' Strid has also contributed vocals to



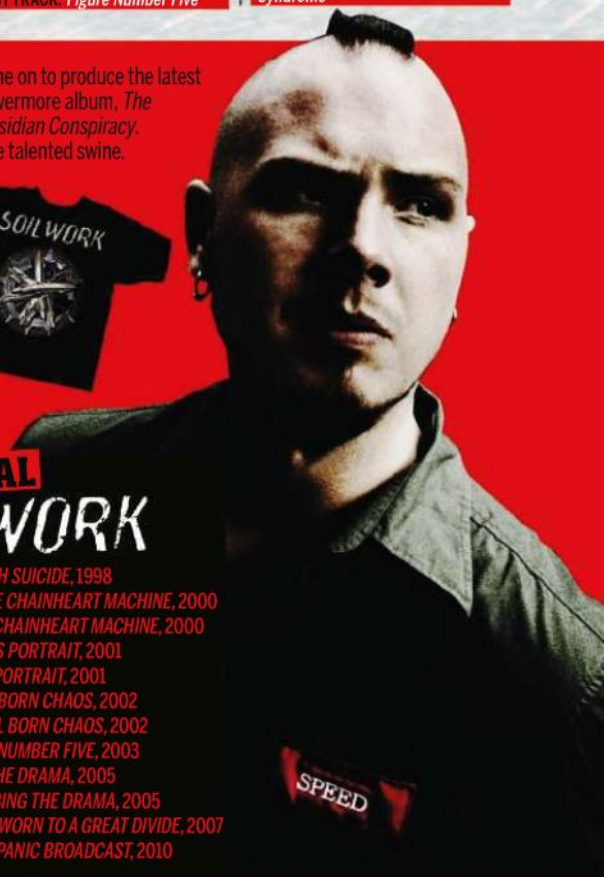
numerous other bands and projects. Thrash fans are urged to check out the consistently splendid Terror 2000, whose 2005 album *Terror For Sale* is

one of the best modern thrash albums of the last few years. Speed is also a current member of melodic death metal crew



Disarmonia Mundi. Their most recent album, *The Isolation Game*, emerged in 2009 to considerable acclaim. Finally, rabid completists are sure to enjoy Warrel Dane's solo album *Praises*.

To The War Machine, which the Nevermore frontman co-wrote with Soilwork guitarist Peter Wichers. The Swede has since



ESSENTIAL SOIL WORK

- 1997 *In Dreams We Fall Into The Eternal Lake* [Demo]
- 1998 *Steelbath Suicide* [Listenable]
- 2000 *The Chainheart Machine* [Listenable]
- 2001 *A Predator's Portrait* [Nuclear Blast]
- 2002 *Natural Born Chaos* [Nuclear Blast]
- 2003 *Figure Number Five* [Nuclear Blast]
- 2004 *The Early Chapters EP* [Listenable]
- 2005 *Stabbing The Drama* [Nuclear Blast]
- 2007 *Sworn To A Great Divide* [Nuclear Blast]
- 2010 *The Panic Broadcast* [Nuclear Blast]



1. The Aardvark Trail STEELBATH SUICIDE, 1998
2. The Chainheart Machine THE CHAINHEART MACHINE, 2000
3. Possessing The Angels THE CHAINHEART MACHINE, 2000
4. Bastard Chain A PREDATOR'S PORTRAIT, 2001
5. Needlefeast A PREDATOR'S PORTRAIT, 2001
6. Follow The Hollow NATURAL BORN CHAOS, 2002
7. Black Star Deceiver NATURAL BORN CHAOS, 2002
8. Figure Number Five FIGURE NUMBER FIVE, 2003
9. The Crestfallen STABBING THE DRAMA, 2005
10. Stabbing The Drama STABBING THE DRAMA, 2005
11. The Pittsburgh Syndrome SWORN TO A GREAT DIVIDE, 2007
12. King Of The Threshold THE PANIC BROADCAST, 2010

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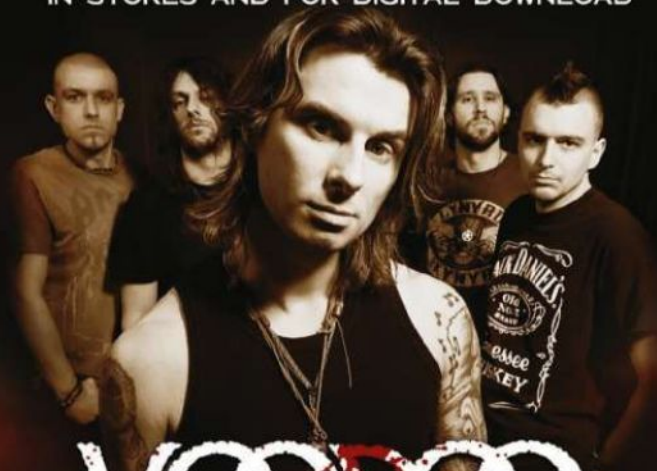
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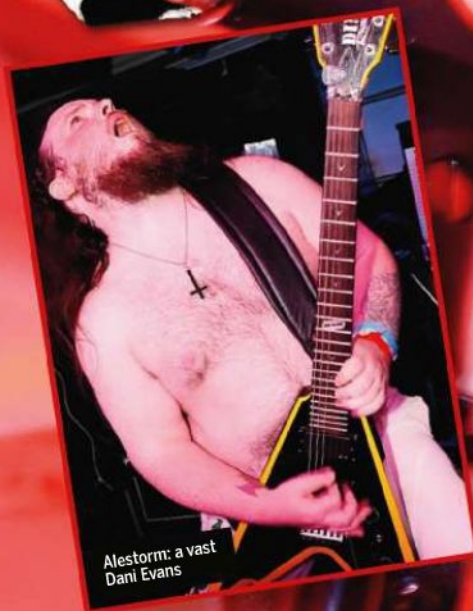
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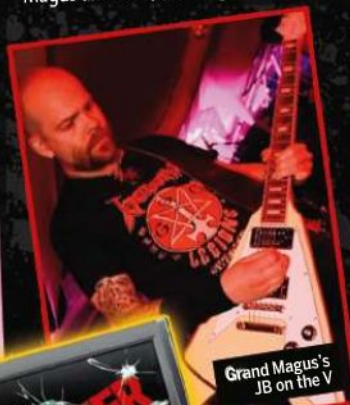
Alestorm: a vast
Dani Evans

Hard Rock Hell Road Trip 2010

IBIZA, SPAIN

THURSDAY

Ibiza may seem like a strange place for over a thousand rockers and metalheads to travel to and watch bands for a week, but once you're here it makes perfect sense. Sort of. Yes, Ibiza is famous for its 4/4 dance music beats and superstar DJs, but sitting around the hotel lobby bar with Grand Magus and Wolf, drinking, listening to



Grand Magus's
JB on the V

old punk and trying to catch lizards at midnight seems perfectly natural. And we haven't even seen a band yet.

In the late-night streets of San Antonio, worlds collide. While the (slightly) well-behaved metalheads sit and drink and talk, the streets are littered with the casualties of the local bars: drunk guys and girls stumbling through the streets on their way to where they probably know not. The buzz is almost tangible and the excited hubbub of the crowd is furthered by the sight of dolled-up girls, men in drag and the beckoning of girls at the strip bar next door.

Tonight is the roadtrip proper with Grand Magus, Wolf, Pig Iron and Battlelore playing in the Summum venue. **PIG IRON [7]** rock out for the second night in a row and we find ourselves headbanging and throwing the horns with two excited little boys who even show Hammer a few things when it comes to air guitar. Next up are **WOLF [9]**, whose tireless energy

is almost suspect. These guys really are a band who love being a band – never doing anything less than grinning from ear-to-ear for the whole of their set of NWOBHM-inspired trad metal. Next are **GRAND MAGUS [8]**, whose stony cool is a powerhouse, while their foot-stomping riffs and metallic grit provides the perfect soundtrack for 500 displaced metalheads and a battalion of Spanish bikers to go completely mad to. During their set we give lessons to the bar staff in the appropriate hand gestures, headbanging and power-grabs. Following them are Finnish orc/human/elf crew **BATTLELORE [7]**, who come on in full stage gear and rip frantically into a set of icy battle metal. There's a rich sound replete with keys and male/female vocals – singer Kaisa is truly enchanting. Anyone with any doubts as to whether a heavy metal holiday in Ibiza was a good idea has them allayed. The crowd spills out into the streets – all smiles, all hugs. What

a perfect night of cold beer and hot metal – and yes, the odd Jägermeister. Hold tight for tomorrow!

FRIDAY

There's no doubt about it: the bustling West End of Ibiza is quite an experience: a jungle of bars, clubs, pool parties, traditional British fish and chip shops, scantily clad women and wasted British tourists. Similarly stimulating are explosive Italian power thrashers **ARTHEMIS [8]**, who are stirring the Hard Rock Hell crowd into a riotous mood thanks to a combination of chunky, shredding material and extravagant facial expressions.



Wolf's horny Axeman

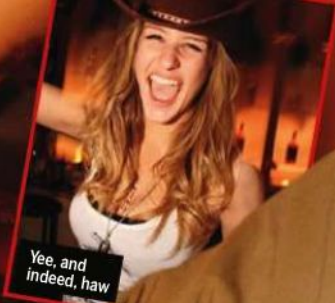
Good for your elf:
Battlelore's Kaisa

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Airline lost your luggage? Party in your pants!



Yee, and indeed, haw



Hammer faves Skindred tear Ibiza a new one



SATURDAY

It's fair to say that our expectations for welsh glam veterans **TIGERTAILZ** [9] weren't particularly high, but surprisingly their set is one of the highlights of our time here, a blazing, feelgood collection of songs that perfectly complement the hedonistic atmosphere of the island. In a similar spirit come **THE QUIREBOYS** [8], a somewhat larger-sounding ensemble, thanks to the honky-tonk ivory tinkling, harmonica abuse and inspired guitar duelling. Vocalist Spike looks simultaneously pumped up and also half asleep, his raspy Rod Stewart-esque vocals perfectly suited to the laidback cool of the bluesy rock numbers. If the crowd have been moving before, it's nothing compared to the unanimous bounce inspired by **SKINDRED** [9], a band who by now must rate as one of the strongest live acts in British metal. Vocalist Benji Webbe remains the focal point, but his three bandmates continue to give him a run for his money, throwing everything into the performance, the bombastic songs leaving the crowd battered but happy. **GILL/DAYAL PATTERSON**

A seaside environ must surely be the perfect setting for a pirate metal band and indeed, **ALESTORM** [8] are on top form, their full-throttle shanties going down a storm with the party-hungry crowd. German oddballs **DIE APOKALYPTISCHEN REITER** [9] walk the fine line between genius and insanity with aplomb, their otherworldly atmosphere only heightened by the use of their native language. Last up tonight are British thrashers **EVILE** [7], who manage to showcase their undeniable talent despite a rather rough set. Drum issues derail proceedings early on in the show, and the set is kept short due to the extreme throat problems of vocalist Matt Drake. Still, his performance remains unhampered and the unbelievable precision and ass-kicking material of the band mean this show is far from a write-off.



Am I Evile? Yes, Matt, you are

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THE ROUNDHOUSE, LONDON

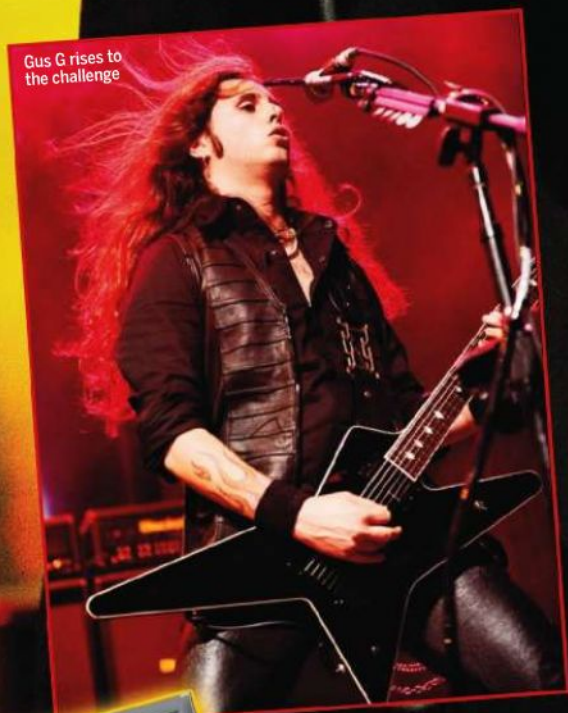
IT starts with a two-minute countdown, as clips of other artists playing the iTunes Festival – of which this is part – flash up. As images of Snow Patrol, Kasabian and Amy Winehouse appear on the big screens, the jeering reaches a crescendo. This is an Ozzy crowd – and they want The Man. Suddenly, there he is onstage, as the strains of his longtime intro tape, *Carmina Burana*, fade. The Prince Of Darkness. With his unmistakably hunched posture and flat-footed gait. “Let’s go fucking crazy,” he exhorts, for the first of many times tonight – and we’re off with *Bark At The Moon*.

This show, the smallest Ozzy’s done in London for many years, isn’t about promoting new album *Scream* – only current single *Let Me Hear You Scream* is played – but more a celebration of a 40-year career and what we get is a crowd-pleasing setlist. Mr Crowley, *Crazy Train*, *Road To Nowhere*, *Suicide Solution* – they’re all here, each greeted with huge roars of approval, as are the Black Sabbath classics *Fairies Wear Boots* and *Iron Man*. Ozzy himself is on

fine form, physically and vocally. It’s onstage that he comes alive. He revels in the atmosphere, throwing out buckets – and even bottles – of water, constantly raging at the crowd (with tongue slightly in cheek) to get ever louder. But there’s also a lot of attention on new guitarist Gus G, the man given the challenge of trying to step in for the seemingly irreplaceable Zakk Wylde. It’s gonna take Gus time to find his own niche, but he does well enough. Even if his solo – part of a really rather lengthy instrumental section, designed to give Mr Osbourne a mid-set break – is a tad ill-judged.

The event – and that’s what it is – climaxes with a double Sabbath punch, as *War Pigs* gives way to *Paranoid*, raising everything to a new level of hysteria. This is a special show, one that highlights above all else Ozzy’s rapport with the fans. There is a genuine, mutual affection that comes across strongly in this comparatively confined venue. “I love you all,” says Ozzy at the end. It’s mutual. [9]
MALCOLM DOME

Gus G rises to
the challenge



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Integrity

Rot In Hell/Never Again

OLD BLUE LAST, LONDON

THAT Integrity were to be the surprise at Holy Terror's 'Midnight Mass' tonight wasn't exactly London's best-kept secret. If anyone's going to persuade scenesters to pack a sweaty Shoreditch pub long into the witching hours in the name of hardcore unity, it's controversy's finest, Integrity. Plus, they've a new album and split EP with Rot In Hell out soon. Predictably, the supports barely need to warm things up as by 11pm fans are already perched on the bar, balanced on merch stands and hanging off ledges to get a better view or crowd-surf angle. Regardless, UKHC's **NEVER AGAIN** [7] pour out their all and their straight-up set sees mics snatched, bodies fly and a plug adaptor ripped from the ceiling. **ROT IN HELL** [6] seem aloof and predictable by comparison, leaving people fidgeting for **INTEGRITY**'s [8] more sinister brand of metallic punk. Ohio's Integrity have always flicked the finger at being conformist, contrived or indeed 'liked', and brutal tracks like *Rise* and *Abraxas Annihilation* fast confirm why they've seen such hype since their 1988 formation. Tonight they mix the old, new and the unexpected but always max out on volume, slam pits and killer solos. The microphone's repeatedly shared, the stage is swarmed and the circlepit engulfs the entire floor within minutes. Their sound's meaty but raw and their attitude's bullish, and shouting along to Dwid Hellion's gruff, hate-instigating lyrics is alarmingly therapeutic. This is the sort of intimate experience that makes unapologetic punk the ultimate religion to worship.

NIK YOUNG



Integrity: smile and the world smiles back

Stone Temple Pilots

BRIXTON ACADEMY, LONDON

RUMOURS of Scott Weiland's commercial death are greatly exaggerated, even if he does turn up tonight dressed as a bank clerk and dancing like a gigolo. Rumours circulated after Download that he could barely stand and speak at the same time onstage so expectation tonight has been either very high or very low depending on your viewpoint. Those waiting for the car crash are still waiting long after the houselights have gone up; the only blemish on Scott's copybook are a faux introduction to Cheap Trick's *I Want You To Want Me*, which confuses the audience no end, and the fact that between songs he mumbles like a quiet kid at the back of the class. Speak up, man! Even the band look as if they're trying to busy themselves while he drones on about something that sounds suspiciously like it might just have popped into his head. The transformation from the unsure figure that looks like he's talking into his hand into the snake-hipped, rock star who wouldn't look out of place playing the villain in a Guy Ritchie film is remarkable. He snaps his mic lead and is away, gliding across the stage like a man who could teach dance and expect full classes every week. And even with an excellent new album to promote, the setlist is pretty impeccable – *Vaseline*, *Plush*, *Sex Type Thing* – and the audience pretty much sings *Creep* for him. For once, Scott Weiland looks grateful for the gift. [8]

PHILIP WILDING



Scott Weiland on the campaign trail – "Vote for me!"

Between The Buried And Me

ASTROHENGE

UNDERWORLD, LONDON

AS one keyboardist, two guitarists and a sickeningly talented drummer simultaneously baffle and seduce gathering early-comers, the unhinged psychedelic metal of London's **ASTROHENGE** [8] proves a perfect opener tonight. Combining thrash, breakdowns, calm and kinder keyboard melodies, no one pattern or style lasts long for **BETWEEN THE BURIED AND ME** [8] either. Ten years going and with six progressive metal albums under their belt, this is actually their first proper UK headline show. As such, this Carolina quintet's setlist doesn't please everyone, but they do ensure the 90 minutes spans a generous number of albums and bless us with an extra encore tonight. *Selkies'* circling guitarwork sounds glorious in the intimate venue, and *Fossil Genera* gathers a host of crowd chants and emphatic air-conducting. Drummer Blake Richardson perfectly nails *Obfuscation* and the break in *Mordecai* leaves the crushed crowd breathless. Occasionally Tommy Rogers' regular screams drag a little compared to the strength of the musical journey behind, but watching him flit between death growls and husky melodic singing is pretty impressive and the crowd's clearly beyond obsessed with his presence. Equal parts instrumental crescendos and thick stormy riffs, it's an intense, relentless night and the band leaves to shouts for more and people ringing the sweat out their t-shirts.

NIK YOUNG

Weedeater

SAVIOURS/BLACK COBRA

THE WELL, LEEDS

BLACK COBRA [7] make up in pure belligerence what they lack in numbers, the duo generating a quartet's worth of anger-fuelled attitude like they really do have four arms each. Not too many rock bands rock without a bassist but this pair somehow make it work. In the wake of their brash, barrelling third album, *Accelerated Living*, Oakland's **SAVIOURS** [8] confirm their transition from swampy stoner to testosterone-drenched, fist-banging mania. After *Black Cobra*, most of their material seems ludicrously uptempo, but it makes a meaty filling for the sludge sandwich that **WEEDEATER** [8] subsequently round off. Even if the noise-loving North Carolinians have seemingly stuffed their speaker cones with dumps of the aforementioned blood-encrusted cotton, it hardly amounts to an act of kindness. If anything, the bottom-heavy mix merely serves to intensify their shuddering sonic attack. There goes another 20Hz.

GREG MOFFITT

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Deathstars frontman
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Deathstars

Sybreed

ISLINGTON ACADEMY, LONDON

HAILING from Switzerland, a country still not particularly associated with great music, **SYBREED [6]** have been slowly making a name for themselves since their debut, *Slave Design*, was released in 2004. Ostensibly an industrial metal band with gothic and new wave influences, Sybreed are a surprisingly accessible outfit, and perhaps would have been even more so a decade ago, there being a clear 90s influence in their occasionally nu metal-esque riffs and clean, almost poppy, vocals. Their stage presence is impressive, not least Steph, the man-mountain who handles bass, but while the band clearly have a following here, tonight's performance is solid rather than standout. Of course, it is **DEATHSTARS [7]** who most have come to see tonight and it's therefore frustrating that the first half of their set is marred by intermittent technical difficulties that often leave little audible beyond drummer Oscar Leander (currently replacing the injured Bone) and vocalist Whiplasher Bernadotte. It is a credit to Whip that he is able to carry the show through such tribulations, though perhaps not entirely surprising given the highly prominent role of the vocals in the band and the man's humorously authoritative and sexually ambiguous stage banter.

With a setlist that leans towards their most recent album, *Night Electric Night* – marching through storming numbers such as *Death Dies Hard* and *Mark Of The Gun* alongside the likes of *Cyanide* – the band eventually get things back on track with invigorating results. If we have one suggestion, it's that with so much synth in the songs, a live keyboard player – rather than backing tape – might make for a somewhat more authentic experience. Perhaps Cat Casino, whose main role, it's probably fair to say, is to look good (mission accomplished, judging by the screaming girls around him tonight) could leave the guitar playing to the more than capable Nightmare Industries and strap on a keytar. Then again... perhaps not.

DAYAL PATTERSON



Deathstars' Cat:
 fe-line dancing

DEATHSTARS: TOMA POKORNY; SYBREED: JEFF; JASTIN DE BERRY; NIGHT ELECTRIC NIGHT: JAMES SHARROCK



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Chrome Hoof

BOCKING STREET WAREHOUSE, LONDON

THIS isn't the first time that *Metal Hammer's* filed copy from a rave, but it's a rare enough experience to make it worth mentioning. In positive terms, this warehouse show just goes to show that 12-piece doom metal/disco/acid house/prog lunatic fringe Chrome Hoof exist so far outside genre constraints that people don't really know what to do with them. And while the audience genuinely reflect the mix of influences onstage (the band include Cathedral bassist Leo Smee, his hip hop drumming brother Milo, doom guitarist Kavus Torabi, giant afro-ed soul singer Lola Olafisoye, analogue moog player and black metal screamer Emma Sullivan), unfortunately the dance section of the crowd seem to be of the Nathan Barley variety. Still, it's credit to just how good the Hoof are at the moment, that no amount of crackheads in flat caps manage to ruin the evening. They are confident of their new material and dispense with obvious crowd-pleasers such as the high-octane post punk disco pummel of *Tonyte* early on. Instead the set builds inexorably to the clangorous, slap-bass metallic attack of *Towards Zero* and then into the doomageddon-summoning, four-guitar guided missile of *Third Sun Descendent*. In fact, by the time their 13th member takes the stage, it's quite clear that the fact that Chrome Hoof employ a 30ft tall metallic goat with red laser eyes is one of the least interesting things about them. [8]

JOHN DORAN



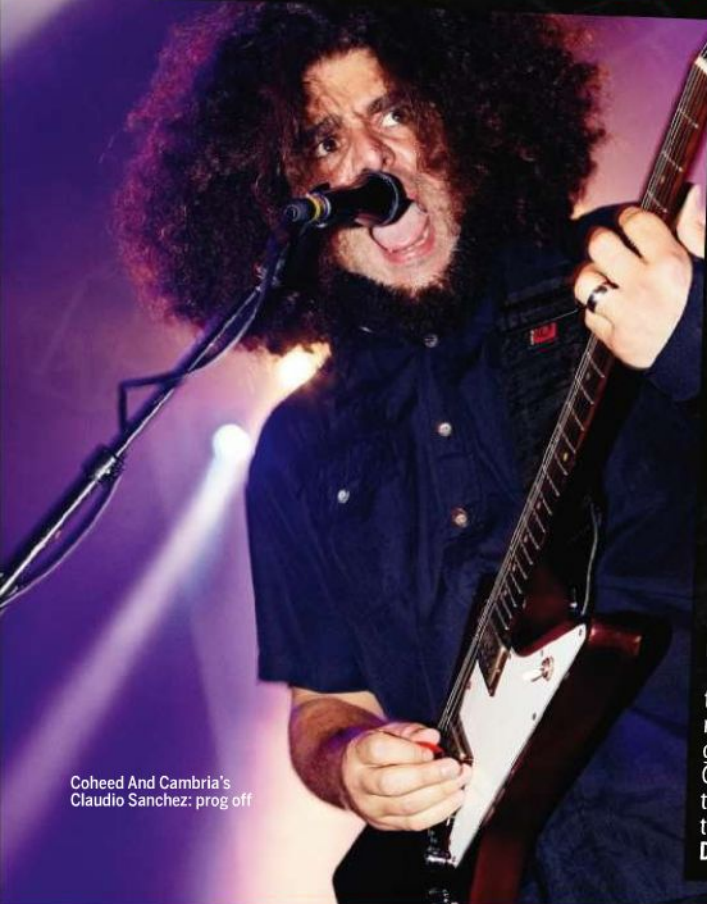
Chrome Hoof's Lola Olafisoye: mildly eccentric

Coheed And Cambria

THE FORUM, LONDON

THERE is something invigorating about the way Coheed And Cambria have risen from obscurity to be headlining a venue of this size. By following their own path and focusing on the art of songwriting (with a touch of conceptual bravado thrown in), Claudio Sanchez and his henchmen have become unlikely but highly credible bill-toppers, and tonight they display a hitherto unseen level of confidence that suits them rather well. Claudio is quiet tonight, barely saying a word to the crowd, but his smile speaks volumes. Whether it's old favourites like *Time Consumer* and *A Favor House Atlantic* or brand new songs like *Here We Are Juggernaut*, the faithful scream along with every word; an apparent 50-50 split between dewy-eyed emo kids and hairy prog nerds making not one jot of difference to the celebratory atmosphere. In fact, it's hard not to applaud the way that Coheed convey many layers of heart-rending meaning to their younger, less cynical fans, with songs that are, effectively, pointedly geeky and obtuse episodes in a sprawling comic book saga. Even the more straightforward sentiments of show-closer *Welcome Home* exist in a world wholly distinct from standard emo-friendly mores, and yet the night ends with tears shed and a thousand faces glossy with climactic elation. Coheed And Cambria have harnessed the power of music and they wield it expertly, like a lightsaber made of tunes. Magic. [8]

DOM LAWSON



Coheed And Cambria's Claudio Sanchez: prog off

Evergreen Terrace

Azriel

THE UNDERWORLD, LONDON

AT 8:30 the venue's still struggling to even partially fill and we're treated to some fairly average metalcore courtesy of Glasgow's **AZRIEL** [6]. Despite the thin crowd, the frontman gives it his all and they make some new fans but the cheery tone of their guitars prevents the effect of their breakdowns lasting for long. Oddly, the atmosphere's a touch prickly today too. Fans seem devoid of both rhythm and manners, so the sporadic windmilling keeps leading to friction and rows. Fortunately, though, headliners **EVERGREEN TERRACE** [6] have a short set. Offering the sort of friendly melodic hardcore that appeals to skate-punks who like breakdowns, metalcore lovers who expect occasional gang shouts but avoid full-blown NYHC or anyone after a shameless chorus, it's surprising that these Floridians don't attract a bigger crowd. Possibly it's the lack of standout tracks. Still, vocalist Drew is a born showman and keeps the excitable crowd hypnotised as his skinny, tattooed frame roars, leaving the singing to guitarist Craig Chaney. Perhaps ET fans demand more melody if they're to shell out on London tickets? Or maybe ET just fall short tonight.

NIK YOUNG

Trigger The Bloodshed

AUNTIE ANNIE'S, BELFAST

BATH-based lords of titanic riffage, Trigger The Bloodshed make their Belfast debut tonight and despite playing in front of a modest-sized crowd, the five-piece ensure that the small venue explodes with bodies from the get-go as their hardcore following limber up like athletes in preparation for the next 50 minutes in the pit. Playing cuts culled from all three of their albums, the band are like a well-oiled machine at the moment and the only thing hampering their muscular brand of metal is a muddy, sometimes lumpen sound. Still, when you've got the likes of *The Great Depression* and *De-Breed* in your arsenal, subtle nuances go out the window in favour of sledgehammer-like sonic violence, so it ain't all bad. Boasting breakdowns as fat as celebrity hyena-man James Cordon's arse, Trigger are giving it both barrels this evening and the songs from current slab of wax *Degenerate* in particular work well live. As the band sign off with *Whited Sepulcher*, the crowd indulge in what can only be described as a wall of main rather than a wall of death, but it doesn't seem to dissuade frontman Jonny Burgan too much, whose heroic performance ensures the city will always remember its first time. Job done. [7]

EDWIN MCFEE

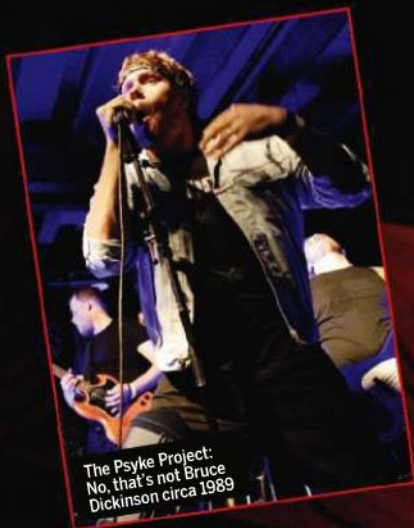
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Spot Festival 2010

ÅRHUS, DENMARK

NOW in its 13th year, Spot festival is a sprawling and rather hip showcase for primarily Danish, but other Scandinavian talent too. But while the focus is broadly indie-based, this year sees a dedicated metal stage, with other weighty party poopers dotted around its three days. **DØDNING'S** [6] two vocalists, careering around the stage and into each other, have clearly been supping from the same, contaminated pool of Iron Monkey worship that Raging Speedhorn once waded into, aided by a hefty dose of Southern groove and some Phil Anselmo-esque crooning. All that's missing is any sense of danger, or any of the

experience-ravaged texture this music demands. Sequestered far from the main venue, the Studenterhuset bar is host to varying degrees of metallic quality, **CRITICAL MASS'S** [3] overcooked, dinner-jazz prog stumbling from one painfully sincere yet inconsequential moment to the next, while **MALRUN'S** [4] youthful appearance and professional sheen only emphasises the smugness that overlays their combination of tepid riffs and wince-inducing balladeering. Even though the guitarist doesn't look old enough to be legally swigging from his bottle of beer, **ESSENCE** [7] not only prove themselves to be well-versed, worthy carriers of the thrash flame, their musicianship would befit a band twice their age, whilst never interfering with the momentum of their Slayer-steeped-in-Germanic-grime, pell mell attack, even when the bassist sits down to demonstrate his quicksilver, finger-picking skillz. Their

confident, charismatic frontman is no slouch on the guitar either, as lead breaks erupt like a shoal of electric eels in the midst of a feeding frenzy. Infiltrating from the non-Scando land of Belgium, **THE LINK** [6] hail from the same school of heartfelt, tensile, post-hardcore experimentalism as the late Burst, and yet even if they all seem to be squirming for a way to claw out of their own skin, they're weighed down by conventional melodies. More fearless with their hardcore underpinnings are **THE PSYKE PROJECT** [8], bathed in constant blue light as their ritualistically juddering, Neurosis-weighted riffs and haunted barks grow ever more in stature until their gravity sucks you in their immeasurable maw. The Danes know that they've got something *really* unique with **KELLERMENSCH** [8], though, and the expectancy for a band on their first album (due imminently in the UK) charges the whole venue before mainlining directly into the besuited band as strings and organ give their billowing metal a narrative flow that bursts out into climactic if unrequited frenzies. Frontman Sebastian, caught up in his mic lead, nearly tears the stage apart and as he leans imploringly into the audience, the windswept currents carry each and every one of us away.

JONATHAN SELZER

The Link: could be better connected



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Mouth Of The Architect

THE CROFT, BRISTOL

BEFORE the main event, local champions **MERRICK [7]** deliver a solid set of earth-shaking grooves and Tool-heavy dynamics, with the thundering *Ten Times* and frontman Marco's undeniable stage persona wrongfully confined in such a small venue. Brighton upstarts **THE MIRE [8]** spend their short time on stage shrouded in darkness that only intensifies the dense, desolate wall of sound that thrills and unnerves in equal measure, setting the scene perfectly for the austerity that follows. Despite getting the approval of Brent Hinds with his contribution to *The Ties That Bind*, **MOUTH OF THE ARCHITECT [7]** have undergone revolving door lineups and brief break-ups, but still continue on their single-minded and unsettling musical path. Softly spoken and affable they may be, but the moment the band strike the first pulverising note, the night descends into a cacophony of slow-burning pain. Touring new EP *The Violence Beneath*, the likes of *Buried Hope* continue to take the Ohian quartet's post-sludge metal to daring and distressing new levels. Each of the four songs adheres to little conformity, the band instead preferring to follow in the footsteps of post-metal luminaries Neurosis and Isis in creating an invasive 45-minute voyage that plummets further and further into the dark consciousness of the human soul. One minute they're piling on an endlessly suffocating barrage of claustrophobic riffs akin to Crowbar at their most bleak, the next embarking on a hypnotic journey filled with sprawling textures, atmospheric effects and dissonant tones. Unfortunately, the muddy sound leaves little room for Jason Watkins' flourishes of atmospheric samples and theremin squeals to add much dexterity to the foray, with the avalanche of strings and agonised barks sweeping away all before them. The sheer sonic experience overwhelms the senses of audience and band alike, who pour every last strain into each note, encapsulated as the final electronic squall brings the night to a shattering close when guitarists Steve Brooks and Kevin Schindel sink to the floor, microphones in hand, ringing out every last tortured scream, looking – to a man – emotionally and physically spent. For all Mouth Of The Architect's credentials and defiant uncompromising musical vision, the live experience is ultimately an experience that is as draining as it is challenging, and should ultimately come with some kind of explicit health warning. Not for the faint of heart or fragile of ear.

ADAM REES

Carnifex

Veil Of Maya/Suffokate/Ingested

UNDERWORLD, LONDON

ABANK holiday is as good an excuse as any to party, so fans have come out in droves to see the breakdown fest that is on offer tonight. What higher praise can be made of Mancunians **INGESTED [7]** than the fact that they continue to draw big crowds even as the opening act – it's testament to the quality of their live set. Technical and groovy in equal measure, everyone awaits their next release with baited breath.

SUFFOKATE [7] are something of a surprise, having never played in Europe before. Those who heard their songs know they value groove over all else, but it is surprising to see just how well that translates into their live performance. It is music custom-made for moshes, dances and assorted flailing appendages, which makes for an extremely entertaining set that lasts long enough to excite, without overstaying its welcome.

The real treat of the night comes from **VEIL OF MAYA [9]**, who deliver a 'Where were you...?' moment. The foursome appear seemingly out of nowhere and play the most incredible, technical, catchy and instantly memorable set of the night. They haven't been in the UK much but there isn't

a single uninterested onlooker to be found – only a frenzied mass of crashing bodies. They manage to walk a very fine line between jaw-dropping technicality and ballsy grooves, appealing to fans of both and alienating neither. Guitarist Marc Okubo is a sheer delight to watch as he plays, seemingly teetering on the brink of having an epileptic fit but reining himself in just before it all goes tits up. A band we definitely need to see more of.

It is more praise of Veil Of Maya than a shortcoming of **CARNIFEX [8]** that the latter seem a tad tame by comparison. Which is not to say they don't put on a good show – far from it. There is no shortage of bands who write music with breakdowns, but only a few like Carnifex know how to use breakdowns to actually enhance a song. With a few choice cuts from their latest record, a healthy dose of older material and all the Carnifex classics, the Californians are quite a sight to behold with their synchronised 'bodybanging'. Whatever you think of their music, you can't help be impressed by their live act.

ABHIJEET AHLUWALIA

Carnifex's Scott Lewis: feeling stranded



Carnifex's Ryan Gudmunds: seven strings of fury

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THE LOST, THE REDISCOVERED, THE PANT-WETTINGLY BIZARRE

SIDE SHOW

Angel Witch (left to right):
Kevin Heybourne, Kevin
Riddles, Dave Hogg

ANGEL WITCH

ANGEL WITCH's career should have paralleled that of Iron Maiden. They may not have had the same record sales, but their influence is just as strong.

Words: Malcolm Dome.

With the exception of Iron Maiden, no NWOBHM band has had such a lasting and major impact on the underground metal scene as Angel Witch. And yet, unlike their London peers, the latter's career has been pockmarked with bad luck and poor decisions, leaving them undervalued by many. "That's because we never did any girlie songs," laughs guitarist/vocalist Kevin Heybourne. "Unlike others, we never pretended to be what we weren't. Seriously, there were mistakes, but being big and famous didn't motivate me."

According to legend, the band's most crucial error happened when they played at The Music Machine (now Koko) in Camden, London during the summer of 1979. There were regular gigs at the venue, with Angel Witch, Iron Maiden and Samson rotating the bill on what were called Heavy Metal Crusade nights. On this infamous occasion, so the story goes, EMI executives turned up specifically to see Sabbath-loving Angel Witch, who were headlining. But Maiden, second on the bill, caught their attention, with the Witch's cause not helped by the fact that the trio (Kevin, bassist/vocalist Kevin Riddles and drummer Dave Hogg) were all pissed, delivering a shambolic performance. Result: EMI signed Maiden.

"It's true, we were all drunk. The headliners went on so late that we spent too long in the pub. My dad Ken (who managed us at the time) says he overheard the EMI lot talking about how good Maiden were, so they probably did benefit."

Angel Witch did release one single on EMI in 1980, *Sweet Danger*, following their appearance on the same

label's seminal NWOBHM compilation *Metal For Muthas*, with *Baphomet*.

"But EMI didn't want to sign us, because they already had Maiden. I think I'm right in saying that we were the last of all the first wave of NWOBHM bands to get a deal."

Angel Witch ended up on Bronze, releasing their self-titled, debut album in 1980, a record that's become one of the most celebrated of the era.

"I didn't like the production at the time," admits Kevin (something *Hammer* can confirm, having been an eyewitness to several arguments in the studio). "There were layers and layers of vocal harmonies and sounds that we could never hope to reproduce live. But over the years, the album seems to have got its own momentum. I can't believe it's still selling and regarded as a big influence on young bands."

At the start of the 80s, Angel Witch were among the hottest live bands in the UK. Time and again they'd blow away headliners like Saxon and Krokus, such was the strength of their following and the power of the stagecraft. Sadly, they simply couldn't hold things together. Dave was replaced by Dave Dufort (older brother of Girlschool drummer Denise), before everything fell apart in 1981. Kevin's subsequent attempts to resurrect the band were doomed to failure. Until now.

For the first time since those halcyon days, it appears Angel Witch have a cohesive lineup, with Kevin now joined by guitarist Chris Fullard, bassist Will Palmer and drummer Andrew Prestidge.

"I've been working on new songs for a while. But the problem is that I keep having to strip them back down,

because what I want is to recapture the feel of those early days. But we do intend to record a new album."

In the meantime, there's a live album out in Japan – *Burn The White Witch*. This was recorded last year at The Underworld in London, where the band return on October 23 this year to headline the Live Evil Festival. They've been personally chosen for the bill by Fenriz of Darkthrone, who's curating the two-day event.

Their eponymous debut has just been reissued for the fourth time to celebrate its 30th anniversary, and Kevin's already thinking about the 40th anniversary!

"I'd love to put out our first demos from 1978, when we covered *Doctor Doctor* by UFO and the Beatles' *Eleanor Rigby*. I'm sure they sound awful, but I know fans would love to have them."

FIND OUT MORE

The best way to keep up with Angel Witch activity is at www.myspace.com/yourangelwitch. Right now, they're streaming the whole of the set from the Roadburn Festival last July. There's also www.myspace.com/angelwitchscoven, which has a load of very early photos of the band, as well as footage of various lineups playing live.



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SKYFORGER

Latvia's pagan warriors reclaim their crown

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REVIVAL IN

SKYFORGER may be forged in the raw environs of the metal underground, but the primal, myth-steeped Latvian five-piece are one of pagan/folk metal founding bands. Now, after seven years of bad luck, they're back.

Words: Dayal Patterson.

As pastimes go, playing 'the waiting game' leaves a hell of a lot to be desired. If you're a fan of Latvian heroes Skyforger, however, it's a game that will have become painfully familiar, due to the fact that it's been a massive *seven years* since they last issued a studio album. OK, so that's only half the time it took *The Chinese Democracy* to see the light of day, but to put things in perspective, it's also the same amount of time it's taken fellow Eastern European folk/pagan metal outfit Arkona to release five records. Those intervening years have also seen the world of folk metal explode into something that is all but unrecognisable compared to the scene of 2003, with bands such as Turisas,

Finntroll, Eluveitie and Ensiferum having got their feet firmly into mainstream territory. While Skyforger may initially maintain many ties with the BM scene due to their heavier, more earthly sound, they also clearly have one foot in the folk metal camp. The question therefore is: Where have Skyforger been?

"We were actually around all this time," comes the reply from vocalist, guitarist and sometime harp player Peter. "Initially we had problems with guitarists – guys came and went and we lost some time teaching them songs. Then there were not many good ideas for new songs, and we fell into a 'creative depression', if I can say that. We tried to create something, but felt bad about it and no new songs were good enough to work on seriously. I even thought that there was nothing to say in music anymore at all – just

seven notes and everything is played already and done. I felt really bad for some time."

All of this will come as a hell of a surprise to anyone who has heard the new album *Kurbads*. Why? Because it is, without a doubt, one of the most inspired and storming metal albums to see the light of day this year. So what was it exactly that got the band moving again?

"I'm not sure," laughs Peter. "Maybe everyone was just excited in the end to actually make an album, to stop the whining and start working! Possibly that was what made the atmosphere creative and healthy again. I don't remember exactly when we started writing – maybe in 2008 – but some songs for *Kurbads* were created even before that. As you can see it took us a very long time to make it through – the

Skyforger (left to right): Martins, Mazais, Peter, Kaspars, Zirgs

"I CAN'T TAKE THOSE 'BEER BANDS' SERIOUSLY"

PETER

INSTINCTS

second guitarist also quit the band when we started work in the studio, so I was left alone to do all guitars and it consumed again *more* time to learn all parts and rearrange it. The thing is, all members have to work, some have family with children to take care for and so on. We cannot spend as much time on the band as we'd want. That's the problem. For example, one day we start to record drums for the first song and the next time we will be in studio is another week, because of work and all life's other crap."

While they may not yet be able to give up the day job, Skyforger are certainly riding something of a career high at the moment. Despite the long period of silence in terms of releases, the group have continued to play live over the years, appearing on numerous festival dates, including two sold-out headlining slots in the UK. There aren't many bands who can keep a strong fanbase like that without a new record to back it up, and it's unlikely to have gone unnoticed by Metal Blade Records, who recently snapped up the band. Peter is clearly pleased with the situation, but his cautious and ever-grounded response echoes the band's longtime DIY stance.

"It will possibly open doors for us to spread our name and music because we were on a small underground label before, and there were even problems buying our albums in some places. Hopefully now with the help of Metal Blade it will be better, though we know that we aren't the first band there, they have a lot of bigger fish there to work with. Still we do a lot by ourselves to promote things, like organising concerts. For me, the only change is a lot more interviews to answer!" he laughs. "I bet this is thanks to Metal Blade!"

Folk's increased prominence in metal music has undoubtedly made the band a more accessible proposition, so it's ironic that *Kurbads* arguably represents the band's least folk-orientated effort yet, with such elements playing er... equal fiddle to thrash and heavy metal influences. The result is a record with a surprisingly broad appeal, one, in fact, that really ought to see the group propelled to a much higher standing thanks to its combination of rousing heroism and crunching metal battery. There aren't many bands after all, who would sit

as comfortably on the Bloodstock main stage as on an underground heathen black metal bill.

"The thrash metal riffs happened naturally," Peter explains. "If a riff sounds good to us and we can put it in to song in a good way, we will, no matter what style it is. I think we always jump from style to style in every album, that is how we create songs after all, there is no deeper calculation or meaning behind it. I have already heard some weird attitudes about this album like, 'This is some thrash/heavy metal and folk, what the fuck is this?!' It seems to me that many old fans wanted more black metal and that raw sound here. It is much easier for new people to start loving it because of the music rather than some unfulfilled expectations. Some older fans say that there is too much classic heavy metal to be heard, but it is on our old albums too. Maybe because of that raw sound people missed it somehow."

The powerhouse production of *Kurbads* is obviously a factor in its effectiveness, although having said that, don't think for one minute that this is some overly polished sonic experience; it just happens to boast a tad



Skyforger modelling the Hammer spring 1011 collection

"FOLK METAL TALKS ABOUT FOLKLORE, NOT THIS CHEESY, COMMERCIAL CRAP"

more punch and clarity than the band's earlier efforts. Still, it's an issue that Peter has clearly spent some time thinking about, and on which he is perhaps overly modest.

"We only started to work on the sound and all that stuff when we arrived in the studio," he explains. "In the beginning we wanted to make a raw, harsh-sounding record, but somehow in the process we forgot about it, and started working on every detail too much. Maybe that was a mistake and the album sounds too 'clear' now. I don't know; on one hand it is great that it sounds massive and rhythmic, but on other maybe it is too... how to say? Not that raw, underground and heavy. I'm not sure which way is better," he concludes with a laugh.

Skyforger are certainly a band who care about what they do and one who are careful to remain mindful of their roots, something that is evident from the themes and lyrics of *Kurbads*. While the group's sound may have evolved, they have retained the strong ties to Latvian culture and heritage that have been a hallmark of the band since their inception, a stance which even led to their 2003 *Zobena Dziesma* (Swordsong) folk album gaining support from the country's Culture Capital Foundation. This time around, Skyforger have chosen to focus upon a legend that has a specific meaning to their homeland, but also a somewhat more universal significance.

"The idea to make an album about Kurbads was born a long time ago. This story is very archaic and it is a great part of our nation's cultural legacy, but can be compared to some stories like those about Cuchulainn, Arthur and the round

table, Nordic myths about Odin, Greek stories about Hercules and so on. Almost every European nation has this ancient story about a man who slays a dragon and *Kurbads* is one that has Baltic roots. This is a story about a man who is magically born from some beast – a white mare in this story – then grows up very quickly and becomes unnaturally strong. He goes out into the world, looking for greater deeds and in most versions he arrives in some kingdom where the king's daughter is kidnapped by devils or ogres. He offers his help and must travel to Underworld, where he fights all those devils and finally frees the king's daughter. Then he must make his hard way back to the surface and finally he marries that daughter and becomes king himself. In the end, in the story of *Kurbads*, the hero must fight evil forces who still persecute him and finally he dies from poison, after he has killed all his enemies. In all these stories there is a lot to find, like how people thought in those olden times, how they lived, and what they believed in."

For Peter, however, the tale has more than just historical significance, and instead bears a metaphorical resonance that still rings true today.

"The story of *Kurbads* is like a ritual of initiation, where a young man must go through many hardships to become a real man in the end. In modern life there is still this ritual for men, though you can't see it as well as it was in olden times. A man must take care of his family. As a man you have this hunter's feeling and so on. In terms of an initiation ritual, school can be just one example – you must finish school to be worthy of something in life! So you must always overcome some challenges and hardships to get through."

A group who offer both thoughtfulness and depth, it's perhaps unsurprising that Skyforger have very little time for the superficial merrymaking of many of their folk metal contemporaries, or indeed the destructive Satanism and nihilism of the black metal scene that they began their creative lives in. While Peter explains that the band have no religious beliefs, he maintains that bands bearing the Pagan metal label have a responsibility to offer more than mere light entertainment. Thus while he recognises that the more jovial side of the movement has helped bands such as his own, he is also quick to point out its failings.

"I can't take those 'beer bands' seriously. Most just jump into folk/pagan metal to make some fame and money while it's still hot. It's good that more people are listening to such music, that there are special folk-orientated festivals and gigs. It's good that people are interested in things like folklore, history and traditions – I think it can give you more than crap about Satan or rotting corpses. But the bad thing is that it all went the wrong way. Now people don't care that much what is behind this or that band, they just need polkas, bagpipes, horns and beer. The primal idea is lost behind all this cheesy commercial crap. Folk/pagan metal, in my opinion and how we do it, talks about history, folklore, traditions and customs of ancient times, connection with your past and ancestors. With no past, there is no future! Many young people listen to such bands with ears wide open and learn from what they hear and sometimes follow those ideas for all their life."

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LOITS

Hailing from Estonia, Loits originally began life as a pagan black metal band boasting progressive elements, but later showed their sense of humour by branding themselves 'flak metal' and then 'flak'n'roll', due to their interests in military history. With a nostalgic aesthetic firmly in place the band explore themes of war and national history, most recently on 2007's *Must Album*.

LATEST RELEASE: *Must Album*, Naibord (2007)



NOKTURNAL MORTUM

Ukraine's Nokturnal Mortum bring together both folk elements – traditional instrumentation alongside the usual electric guitars and drums – and symphonic influences, to create an epic take on BM. The nature of their nationalist interests, however, offers a conundrum for those who love the music, but have no sympathy for their politics.

LATEST RELEASE: *The Voice Of Steel*, Oriana (2010)



BLOOD OF KINGU

Also from Ukraine, BM band Blood Of Kingu feature members of Hate Forest and Drudkh, acts whose perceived, though never explicitly stated, political leanings have also caused controversy. *De Occulta Philosophia* (2007) stayed close to the Hate Forest blueprint, but latest effort *Sun In The House Of The Scorpion* has seen them branching out stylistically.

LATEST RELEASE: *Sun In The House Of The Scorpion*, Candlelight (2010)



SVARTTHRON

Despite a name that's Norwegian for 'Black Throne', Svarthron actually hail from Lithuania and have made a name for themselves with no fewer than five albums in three years. Taking black metal as their starting point, the group add ambient elements and vocal experimentation to create a unique aesthetic, something also true of the bloody artwork of latest album *Kraujo Estetika*.

LATEST RELEASE: *Kraujo Estetika*, Inferna Profundus (2010)





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Subterranea

Beasts Of Bergen

HOLE IN THE SKY, Bergen, Norway's revered, Subterranea-sponsored extreme metal fest is marking its 11th year by delving into the darkest reaches of the occult for its lineup. Subterranea interrogated its protagonists to find out what we have in store. **Words: Dom Lawson, Jonathan Selzer.**



Ihsahn: a brush with the divine

"I WAS EASY TO RECOGNISE AT INFERNO FESTIVAL AMONGST ALL THE CORPSEPAINT AND MAYHEM'S 100 KILOS OF MEAT"

IHSAHN

Ihsahn

Former Emperor frontman with a touch of brass.

You're playing on the same night as Venom, which is a bit of a Golden Gods reunion from last year, as you both received awards. How well do the two of you know each other?

"It was very cool to meet him at Golden Gods and we had a really interesting chat. We had met briefly before. We played with Venom in Greece around 1997 and after that show we heard that they'd invited us over to their hotel, but by the time we got that message it was so late, it was no use. He was a very nice bloke and I really enjoyed his company and I'm looking forward to seeing him again."

The Friday you're playing is a very progressive lineup. Are you aware of the other bands you're playing with?
"I know Cathedral and Venom, but the other bands I'm not quite sure. I hope it doesn't sound arrogant saying that, I'm just not up to date on music!"

You debuted material from the latest album, *After*, at this year's Inferno festival, and there was a stylistic shift in that album. How different are the new songs to play live?

"Of course there's the difference of playing eight-string guitars and three guitarists. It's not that different, but it's very much harder

to tighten up the sound on the stage, because it's such a low tuning that it competes with the bass guitar. And of course, for the most part - I'm not sure if Jurgen Monkeby [guest saxophonist from Shining] can come with us, so *A Grave Inversed*, which we also did from the new album, also works without the saxophone, but *On The Shores* would not really work that well without it. I'm still hoping that Jurgen will be there."

How important are the onstage visuals to your set?

"Well, I think I was easy to recognise at Inferno for instance, because there was

a lot of corpsepaint and Mayhem played right after me, and they brought 100 kilos of meat onstage. On the other hand, it was just me and the boys playing our thing - nothing in the way of pyros or backdrops. At the end we were seven people onstage, and with my music, you just have to do what you're comfortable with. I'm very confident in the HITS performance, both because we've rehearsed this very thoroughly, and I'm so lucky to have the guys from Leprous backing me. They're always prepared. There's no drinking and partying when we go out and play, they're just very pleasant people to be around and it makes the whole experience very easy for me."

Cronos goes for the kill

Cronos (Venom)

The man who created black metal.

What appealed to you about playing Hole In The Sky?
"It's Norway, mate! In 2007, we did our first proper

Scandinavian tour. We hit Copenhagen at the back-end of the 80s and we did this one little festival in Finland once, but as soon as we arrived in 2007 we thought, 'Fuck, man! Why have we not been coming to Scandinavia more often?' You know, these guys were in tears. They said, 'We never believed Venom would come for us!' you know? I'd still say that Norway was the best crowd of that tour. It was like we'd come home. They were so fuckin' pleased to see us."

The whole Norwegian black metal scene grew out of Mayhem's love for Venom. Is that something you're particularly proud of?

"I've met the Mayhem guys a few times now. I've always said that when people say Venom they think about black metal, but when you say Mayhem or Burzum, people say, 'Oh, church burnings and murder!' and so it's great that they've persevered through all the

controversy. We had Mayhem supporting us in Bulgaria. It was really good. We had a good chat as well, and I've got a lot of respect for those guys. They went through a lot of shit and stuck with it in the name of metal and in the name of the music, so they deserve a round of applause."

With 30 years of material to choose from, how do you pick a set these days?

"I make albums for me. I make the ultimate choices and decisions when it comes to the albums, but live, it's for the fans, so I've got to structure a set that I think is going to work for the audience. Maybe you get it right sometimes and maybe you get it wrong sometimes, but I stand onstage and I try to listen to what they're all shouting, so at the next gig you're trying to readjust the set to please the crowd. But we're nearly there, because we play an entire 30 years of Venom onstage now. We play songs from every Venom album, even *Calm Before The Storm!* We're nailing the lot now. There's got to be something in the set to please some fucker out there! Ha ha!"

Ivar Bjørnson (HITS festival manager)

Enslaved guitarist goes behind the scenes.

Could you briefly describe your involvement with the festival?

"I am one of the founders who arranged the festival for the first time in 2000. I am a member of the board and bear the glamorous title of festival manager. My main mission is production and economy: sound, stage and lights, budgets and schedules. The guy with the beard and the glasses, so to speak."

The last few years have seen each HITS take on a loose theme. How do you feel the themes have affected the identity of the festival, and what thoughts did you have that lead to this year's occult theme?

"This is the absolute genius of our programmer, Torgim; he manages to create a new identity for each festival. I think some of the inspiration for this year's theme, as it turned out, were inspired by a desire for something genuine, something deep and meaningful. All of a sudden we found ourselves in a weird spot – the whole concept of extreme metal was becoming something limp and mushy. We're not talking about sales or recognition (Venom are headlining for fuck's sake!), but about the horrors of the 'ordinary world' seeping through the walls: fame as a musical director, posing as means to an end and so forth. We wanted to celebrate the burning visions and pounding hearts across the metal sphere – not measured by bpm or amount of distortion; but by commitment and sincerity."

What does it mean for you to have Venom play this year?

"It means the world – or the end of the world, if you like. For me personally, Venom was the first black metal band I ever got in touch with. My dad bought the *7 Dates Of*

Hell VHS by accident when I was 10. I called him the day they got booked, and he was equally enthusiastic. He has been a driver for many years – actually he is Nifelheim's favourite festival driver – and he is more than ready to drive this year when Venom comes."

HITS has a special sense of community. What's your perspective on what makes this festival unique?

"A mixture of being musicians and people deeply involved in the scene with experience working with arranging the festival, and genuine lovers of music in

every aspect of the organisation: from the people collecting tickets to the backstage hosts to the stage security. No bullshit, no fashion, no peer-pressure – just great music and art that is performed and received full-heartedly!"

Ivar looks out for subordinates

"WE WANT TO CELEBRATE THE BURNING VISIONS AND POUNDING HEARTS ACROSS THE METAL SPHERE"

IVAR BJØRNSON

Tom G Warrior (Triptykon)



Are you looking forward to playing HITS with your new band?

"Definitely. I've been dying to get on the road again. For me, the band is over two or three years old. It took us a long time to finish the album so I'm very eager to get out and play this music for people. It's a very unique situation. Musically, people can look forward to the exact same thing that Celtic Frost once provided, while on a personal level, this is a much more positive experience for me behind the scenes."

Have you been surprised by the response to the album?

"I was smart enough not to predict anything and I made the album I had to make. It's extremely honest, but I couldn't predict how it would go down with people. I had no idea if the audience's emotions would connect to mine. I released it and was prepared for anything. Even after 28 years in the business, I never take anything for granted. Nothing is ever guaranteed. I'm utterly surprised and honoured that the album has had such fantastic reviews."

Are you looking forward to sharing a stage with Venom?

"Yes, of course. I have a huge personal affinity for the Hole In The Sky festival and there are always people there that are part of my circle of friends. This year will be no different and I'm expecting to meet a million people that I'm dying to meet again or meet for the first time. This festival feels like it's carved from my own flesh and it's a huge honour to be asked back there."

Lee Dorrian (Cathedral)

British doom veterans get the finger in Norway.

What appealed to you about HITS?
"It would be stupid not to play there really, wouldn't it? Triptykon are playing! I went there a couple of years ago and had a really good time. It was really laidback and the people who were there weren't posers. They seemed to be really into it. It's one of those rare events that's full of people that are there because they want to be!"

Are you flying the flag for doom in the home of black metal?

"I suppose we're a bit different from most of the bands on, but we share history with a lot of those bands too. Electric Wizard

played there the other year and they stood out, but that just adds to the vibe. We're friends with most of the bands playing anyway. It's almost 24 years since the first Napalm Death album, and you forget how many people you actually know and have had good times with, so that's always cool."

You've got a big catalogue of songs to choose from. What will you play?

"The new album's is quite varied. When we did the UK dates we did about six songs from it, but festivals are different. This one's indoors, so maybe we'll do lots of new stuff. We're taking our keyboard player so we can play anything. We've been playing stuff from the first album too."

Do you have a strong relationship with Norway?

"The first time I played there was in 1988 with Napalm. The tour nearly got cancelled because Shane [Embury] refused to get the train, so he flew and me, Mick [Harris] and the others got the train, which took 42 hours or something ridiculous. Three or four hours before Oslo we got clocked by security and when we got there we all ended up getting searched, with the old finger up the arse and everything. We eventually got to the gig, which was at the Blitz club, this old punk joint, at about two in the morning. We still did the gig, though! So my relationship with Norway didn't start well, but it's been much better ever since then! Ha ha!"

Erik Danielsson (Watain)

Sweden's Satanic emissaries delve into the dark.

How would you describe your previous HITS experiences? Is this an important festival for Watain?

"We never played at Hole In The Sky. I have just been there visiting. I look forward to returning to participate artistically. But you must also understand that the circumstance in which a Watain ceremony takes place is very secondary to us. If it is a barn in the slums of Mexico or if it is Wacken Open Air does not make so much of a difference, as long as we have a stage to transform into our temple."

We gather you had some problems at Maryland Deathfest. Will you be able to do your full show and performance at HITS?

"The problem was that our guitarist Set was denied entrance to USA, because their warehouse of a government did not like some of the things he had done in the past. So I had to play guitar, which was a bit of a compromise. The important thing is that we did it, and that we proved once again that nothing can stop the Devil's emissaries from doing their work."

How do festival shows differ from your own headlining gigs? Is it still possible to generate the required atmosphere?

"I always get in the same trance-like state on stage no matter where. But then again

Watain: metal up your ass!

we don't take gigs where we're offered to play outside at 2pm. As long as there is a stage and no sunshine, we are able to deliver what we have come to deliver. The very fire of Satan."

Are there any bands on the bill that you feel a particular kinship with?

"There are of course The Devil's Blood and Repugnant, two bands which we have a close relation to. We played with both of them in London and it was better than anything else I've seen in a very long time. Other than them, fuck, there's a lot actually. There's Autopsy of course, Angel Witch, Rotting Christ... it will be a busy weekend!"

Chris Reifert (Autopsy)

How does it feel to be back in action as Autopsy again?

"It feels like Autopsy, which is a good thing in this case. If it felt like Ratt, there could be a problem. Really, we're psyched, juiced and frothing at the mouth to bring our foul death metal to the hungry Norwegian freaks!"

What appeals to you about HITS as a festival?

"I'll let you know after we've been there. At this point it seems like a great place to play and the lineup is really good. Plus it's a great Sabbath song, eh? Who can argue with that?!"

Venom, Tom Warrior, Obituary, you guys... this is like a reunion of extreme metal pioneers! How does it feel to be regarded as veterans now?

"Old! Ha ha! Besides that, we are honoured to be playing along such metal juggernauts and are stoked that people are welcoming us with open skulls and bowels. Should be one hell of an onslaught of heaviness."

Are there any other bands you're looking forward to watching?

"Why, yes there are! The ones you mentioned are fantastic and there's more that I want to see as well. We will only be there briefly so I won't get to see everything I want but I will take advantage of what I can. Very much looking forward to it indeed!"

How would you describe your relationship with Norway over the years?

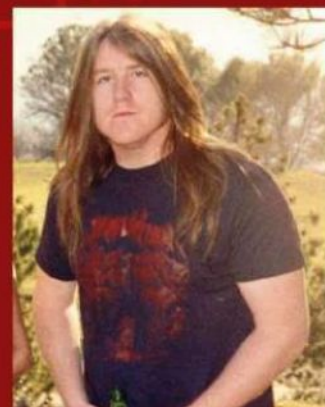
"Outstanding. We send each other cards on holidays and have a friendly rapport on the most austere of occasions. Yes, Norway and us go together like peanut butter and jelly with the crusts cut off. Now let's get to the whiskey and beer!"

Do Autopsy still know how to party?

"I have no idea what you mean, young man. Are you insinuating something?"

Can we expect all the old classics in your HITS set?

"You can at the very least expect all our old hits in our classics set. Unless of course you want us to play all Bay City Rollers covers. That's probably not recommended, though."



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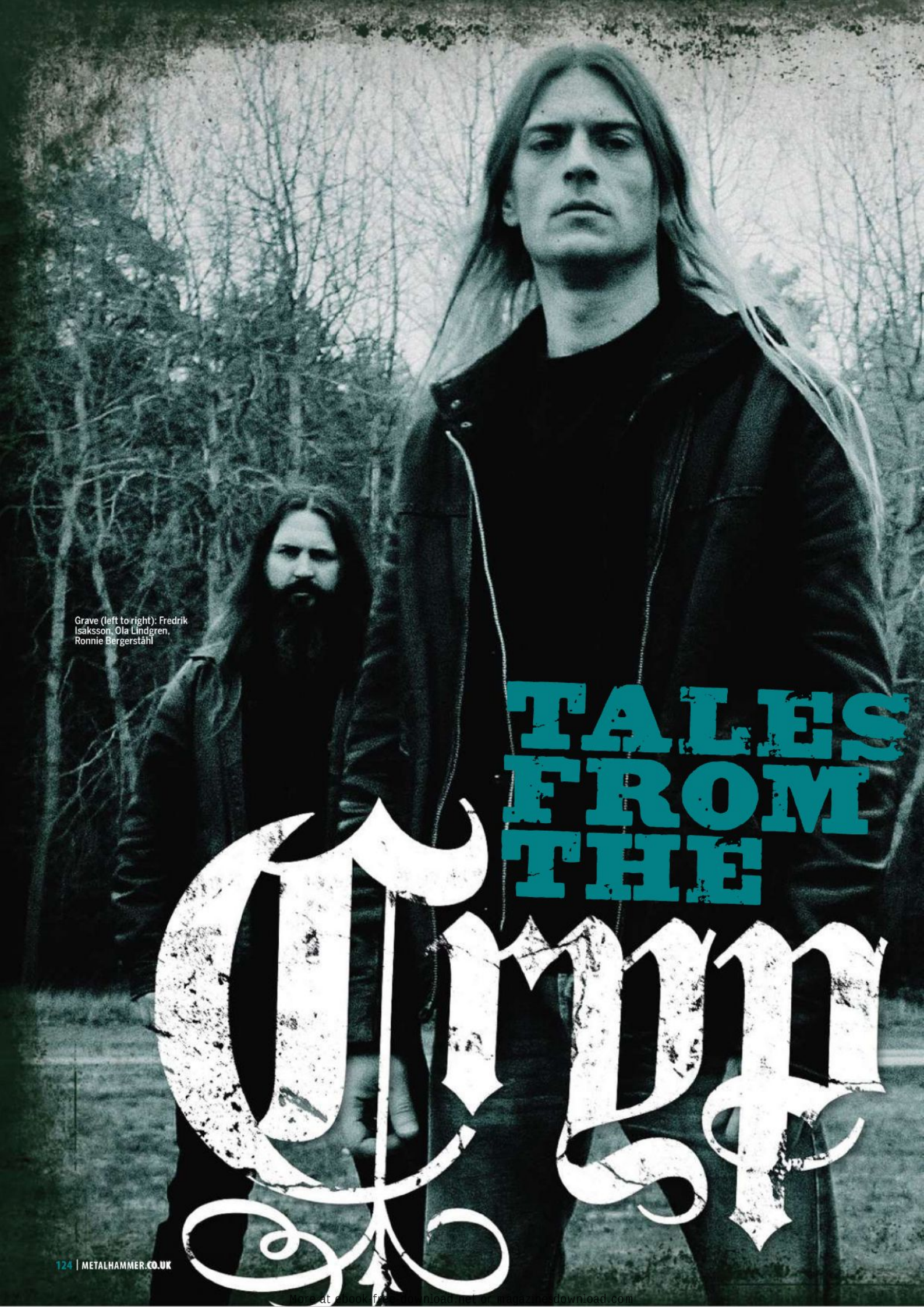


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Grave (left to right): Fredrik
Isaksson, Ola Lindgren,
Ronnie Bergerstahl

TALES FROM THE

Grave

GRAVE are one of the founding fathers of the Swedish death metal scene, sticking to their power-coursing old-school template for over 20 years... yet they seem highly tuned to the modern age.

Words: Dayal Patterson.

Formed in the late 80s, Grave are one of Swedish death metal's most iconic outfits, having made their name alongside fellow legends Entombed, Unleashed and Dismember in the early 90s.

Beginning with the classic *Into The Grave* album, the band issued four full-lengths and an EP between 1991 and 1996 before taking a hiatus, returning in 2002 with the aptly titled *Back From The Grave* and releasing an album every two years since then. The latest offering, entitled *Burial Ground*, offers everything you would expect from the band, with nine songs of old-school death metal characterised by chunky hooks, a morbid atmosphere, tight but unfussy musicianship and straightforward song structures. The result is a record that packs a formidable punch and offers a refreshing alternative to the highly technical nature of contemporary death metal, a point vocalist and guitarist Ola Lindgren is more than aware of.

"I can be very impressed by those very technical bands," he explains, "but it doesn't really give me as much as putting on an old Entombed or Dismember album. It's like getting a kick in your head, you totally get into the song because you grasp what's going on, as opposed to people that might be very skilled but not so hot in terms of songwriting. I need an instant reaction to a song, I don't want to have to sit around and think about what they're doing. With this new album and the last one we're actually striving to go

two months,' and we didn't really worry about anything, we were in our early 20s and didn't care about that stuff. It's harder now of course, but on the other hand we get good offers, we get on good tours and everything's been really working out well."

Despite their resolutely traditional stance, Ola is certainly open to the possibilities that the rise of modern death metal and other forms of extreme metal can bring, especially with regards to touring. As witnessed by the recent surprise pairing of Swedish black/death metal pioneers Necrophobic with The Black Dahlia Murder, old- and new-school are beginning to come together in a manner once largely unimaginable. It's something Grave are happy to embrace.

"Back in the old days people were very narrow-minded; if you were into death metal you were into pretty much nothing else. Now kids are more open to liking different things, whether it's Slipknot, Marilyn Manson, Dillinger Escape Plan, black metal, grindcore or what we do. Kids can see a metal show every weekend and a lot of bands have caught onto that and are looking to do crossover packages, and that's something we're looking at doing, perhaps with some deathcore bands, maybe some black metal bands, something interesting that would draw people from different camps of extreme metal and reach a wider audience. It's always good if extreme music gets attention and spreads; it creates opportunities for all kinds of bands in those genres."

"TECHNICAL BANDS DON'T GIVE ME AS MUCH AS ENTOMBED OR DISMEMBER"

OLA LINDGREN

backwards, more to the roots, to do it like the old days; very straightforward, brutal, easy death metal and it's working very well for us. I guess we are one of the few remaining bands who kept to our style and never went super-technical or experimental in any way."

That's a point that Grave are undoubtedly proud of and a fact that has earned them a loyal fanbase. But after working with this formula for so many years – barring the occasional surprise, such as the inclusion of an Alice In Chains cover on 2006's *As Rapture Comes* – do the band still find themselves excited by what they do?

"I think in those early years we were striving to first of all get an album out, and then go on tour, and now these things have been done many, many times," ponders Ola. "But there is still excitement writing new material, putting it all together and I really enjoy working in the studio. It's very cool to see that younger people are taking an interest in older bands that are still touring and going strong, that is something that keeps us going. We're busier now than we've been in many years with touring and live shows and that keeps everything rolling."

Indeed, the band have been steadily upping their travels since their 2002 return, sharing the stage with the likes of Nile and Krisiun and heading out as far as Asia, Australia and New Zealand. Now at a time in their lives when many are looking to settle down, Grave find themselves increasingly on the road, something of a necessity in the current musical climate.

"Record sales today are really a fraction of what it was once," Ola sighs. "If you want to make a living it's just touring and shows really unless you sell substantially. There's a big gap between bands on our level and, say, Amon Amarth, Opeth and Dimmu Borgir. Doing shows is really the way to bring an income – and merchandise of course – so you have to be able to make a living out of that. Back in the day we would just say, 'Fuck it, we're going on tour, see you in

For his own tastes, Ola admits that he tends to look to the past, with only a couple of modern acts like Swedish black metallers Craft and post-Celtic Frost band Triptykon sitting in a playlist comprised of classics such as Testament, Autopsy, Exodus and King Diamond. Nonetheless, when it comes to his own music, he is keen to highlight that innovation isn't entirely frowned upon during the writing process.

"The whole feeling is very old-school but we do stuff with the arrangements of songs to break this old pattern," he explains. "There are very different structures within the songs, stuff you might not notice, but for us it's a completely different way of putting together the song. Having new people like our drummer Ronnie Bergerstahl [who joined in 2006] contribute also helps – he writes a lot of music and gets a lot of very cool ideas which I can build onto."

On the subject of new contributors, *Burial Ground* features not one but two guest appearances, with long-time friend Matti Karki of Dismember contributing lyrics to the song *Dismembered Mind* and Nile's Karl Sanders playing lead on a number entitled *Bloodtrail*.

"We did two European tours with Nile and became very good friends," explains Ola, "and Karl was totally into the idea, so I sent him the track with some ideas and within 24 hours he sent a file back. Since touring with them I'm more into them and having seen them 60 times you really get the ideas and get the songs."

So would Ola ever consider throwing a few Nile-style technicalities into the Grave melting pot?

"No, not at all!" Ola laughs. "First of all, I don't have the skills for it, I think, and secondly, it would be too far from where our roots and our hearts are. It would have to be a side project if ever I was to do that. But I would have to call up Karl and get him to give me some lessons first!"

**BURIAL GROUND IS OUT NOW VIA REGAIN RECORDS
WWW.GRAVE.SE**

Fresh Meat



Winterfylleth (left to right): Simon Lucas, Nick Wallwork, Chris Naughton, Mark Wood

Winterfylleth

Stirring 'English heritage' black metallers learning lessons from the past.

Waes Hael! Manchester-based Winterfylleth's second album, *The Mercian Sphere*, is a majestic hymn to Anglo-Saxon history, offering a parallel to the gloriously epic sounds of Ireland's Primordial and Ukraine's Drudkh that they've called 'English heritage black metal'. Which begs the question, what does the term mean?



Who They Are:

LINE-UP: Chris Naughton (vocals, guitar), Mark Wood (guitars), Nick Wallwork (bass/vocals), Simon Lucas (drums/vocals).

SOUND LIKE: Majestic, rousing, banner-waving black metal perfect for a night of mead and roast venison.

CURRENT RELEASE: *The Mercian Sphere* (Candlelight, 2010)

WEBSITE: www.myspace.com/winterfylleth

"There are probably bands who sound similar to us, but in terms of concept there aren't many who have covered what we have in the lyrics," explains frontman Chris Naughton. "Mostly what we've based our lyrics around are poignant and interesting things in British history and folklore. I think there are some great things about English history that people can relate to, but the vast majority of people don't know about the lyrical content that we've tried to bring to people. I think there are some great things about British history that people can relate to. There are loads of great stories – about how the modern world relates to the past, the struggles that have gone on, one religion crusading against another and so on. It's poignant to remember that these things have gone on for a long time."

Seeking to extend the continuity of British history further, Winterfylleth have taken inspiration from a number of ancient native texts, in particular the *Codex Vercellensis*, a collection of Anglo-Saxon poetry that dates back to the 11th century at least.

"Obviously people didn't have mobile phones and email communication," says Chris, "so the way these stories were told was long-verse poetry. We have a song called *The Wanderer*, which is in three parts and is based on a poem called *The Wayfarer*."

The Battle Of Brunanburh provides yet more inspiration for *The Mercian Sphere*. Chris outlines the tale: "A few English men held back a huge Nordic army in the 10th

century. It's a lesson about how the spirit of a group of people is strong, even if they are in small numbers, if they believe in who they are and how that affects others."

Winterfylleth's fascination with British heritage hasn't escaped controversy, coming to a head when their now-former bass player – unhelpfully also called Chris – posted racist views online.

"There were a few things that were said that misrepresented the point and the purpose of Winterfylleth," bemoans the frontman. "The original lineup was me and Simon [Lucas, drums], and there wasn't much we could do so we felt the only way was take stock and take a step back. We decided to go back to where we started and focus on what the band was supposed to be about, not a few rosey comments on the internet. Then we started to think about involving a few new people. Mark [Wood] is a great guitarist and Nick [Wallwork] has brought a great amount to it in terms of his songwriting and the fact that he's a solid bass player."

The band feel that this is all in the past now and are rightly proud of what could be one of the best UK albums of the year. So, considering they're a black metal band, what happened to the obligatory scary names?

"It's hard to go down the pseudonym route when you've been in other well-known bands before," laughs Chris. "It wouldn't work. People will just go, 'Oh, that's just Chris from Atavist'. Ha ha ha!"

ALASTAIR RIDDELL



Celeste: The glowing reviews went to their heads

Celeste

The anguished black metal produced by prolific French outfit Celeste is notable in that its intensely bleak and unremitting sonic assault is matched by the band's lyrical bile. Their third album, *Morte(s) Nee(s)* rails against the ill-treatment of women in modern life, with vigorous clarity. Singer Johan says: "Metaphorically, it deals with the inevitable loss of innocence that every woman has to deal with. This album is totally dedicated to women." Some might say that rape, paedophilia, incest, domestic violence and eating disorders are perhaps not fitting subjects for song lyrics but Celeste treat these things with 100 per cent seriousness. He adds: "I just hope that people will first think, 'Fuck, that's fucking violent and oppressive'. And even if they can't listen to the whole thing in one shoot first, they'll come back to it again and again to get all the details that are behind the fog."

Who They Are:

LINE-UP: Johan (vocals), Guillaume (guitar), Antoine (bass), Royer (drums).

SOUND LIKE: Wolves In The Throne Room minus the cuddly edge.

CURRENT RELEASE: *Morte(s) Nee(s)* (Denovali, 2010)

WEBSITE: www.weareceleste.com

Masakari

"We feel that everyone is personally affected by religion. It is a force so powerful in our society and the root and catalyst for many of the world's problems." If one good has come out of said scourge, though, it's awesome bands like Cleveland's crusty/D-beat terrors, Masakari. But it's not just religion that rankles vocalist Joe's ankles. The band's storming debut full-length, *The Prophet Feeds*, draws influence from their direct surroundings. "The song *Pain Conceived As A Tool* is our way of exposing both the horrors of dog fighting and the media hysteria surrounding pitbulls. Having two pitbull owners in the band, it's sick that we can't even walk our dogs without muzzles in our own neighbourhoods. Society will always look for the easy way and rather than doing the extra legwork to punish owners, many cities just ban the breed."

Who They Are:

LINE-UP: Tony Yanick (vocals), Greg Williams (guitar), Joe Yanick (guitar), Adam Thomas (bass), Jon Buchek (drums).

SOUND LIKE: Tragedy-style Dis-core anthems of disenfranchisement.

CURRENT RELEASE: *The Prophet Feeds* (Southern Lord, 2010)

WEBSITE: www.myspace.com/masakaripunk



Masakari get hot under the collar



BXI
(Boris w/ Ian Astbury) CD

Southern Lord proudly announces an incredible collaboration between label artists Boris and Ian Astbury. This finely-crafted four-song release, simply entitled BXI, was tracked and mixed in Tokyo in late April. Astbury's iconic rock vocals are a perfect match for Boris's straightforward, laid-back, but still raw and imaginative songwriting constructed for the EP; another intriguing display within the band's ever-morphing, extensive résumé of releases, tours and collaborations.



Masakari
The Prophet Feeds CD

A devastating blend of d-beat crust and anxious hardcore descendant to His Hero Is Gone and From Ashes Rise, as well as more punk/crust founders G.I.S.M. and Discharge. Crushing, discordant riffing smashes its way through the barrage of ravenous drum battery, broken, eerie guitar leads entangled in the song structures, and all fueled by guttural, searing vocals that power the angry, socio-politically inspired lyrics.



Black Breath
Heavy Breathing CD

Behold the debut recordings of Seattle's new lords of destruction: Black Breath! A extremely raw and uncompromising blend of angry hardcore and ripping metal, inspired by a steady intake of Discharge, Poison Idea, Celtic Frost and Bathory. Available on 180 gram vinyl and compact disc.



Goatsnake
Flower of Disease CD

Reissue of the long out of print Flower of Disease album from heavy doom/blues legend: Goatsnake. This is essential listening for fiends of heavy music with a sinister swing. The heaviness of doom, the swing of soul and the dark cry of the blues.

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Subterranea ALBUMS

Reviewed next month



Grave: death defying



Grave

BURIAL GROUNDS

REGAIN

Swedish deathsters with pedigree SOMETIMES, music can get too smart for its own good. As intricate and forward thinking as the likes of like Between The Buried And Me can be, sometimes you just want to strip down to a loincloth, give in to your primitive urges and retreat into a cave to eat raw meat. *Burial Grounds* by Sweden's veteran death metallers, Grave, is probably the perfect soundtrack for this. It's 2010, but Grave don't care about that, as their ninth

album flips a decapitated bird at the competition and parties like it's 1986. The album hits the ground running with *Liberation*, which speaks immediately to everyone's inner bastard, with dirty-ass, supercharged doomy riffs, disgusted vocals and crashing drums. The album continues in this vein before things slow down a mite with *Dismembered Mind*. Things get more typically death metal after though, until the title track, which is a mid-paced, seven-minute battering, not unlike something you'd find on Triptykon's album. But what Grave have over their more finicky compadres is a purpose and imposing sense of power that comes from knowing where your strengths lie, and how to wield it with maximum force. [8] DANIEL CAIRNS



CASTEVET

MOUNDS OF ASH

PROFOUND LORE

Half as black, twice as good

THE purists may be shaking in their Count Grishnackh commemorative capes, but the more folks with musical backgrounds outside of strict black metal get involved in black metal, the more interesting black metal becomes. New York's Castevet ply a scathing and atonal trade where elements of angular, urban noise-rock and filthy punk poke their way through the chromatic soundscape veils on which their compositions are based. Castevet aren't as raw and ripped as Liturgy or as irascible as Black Anvil, but they sound like someone smoothed Watain's evil edges, upped Deathspell Omega's downcast factor while asking Today Is The Day's Steve Austin and his sense of unbalance along for the ride. [7]

CONNIE GORDON



CIRCLE OF DEAD CHILDREN

PSALMS OF THE GRAND DESTROYER

CANDELIGHT

Deviant grind with a ragged soul

WE live in an age when many young bands incorporate death and grind influences without having a clue what the genres represent. Thus the hateful and ardently scabrous din CODC churn out arrives like a divine, purging carpet bomb attack sent to obliterate the clueless. This band have always had more than myopic blasting up their sleeves, and it's their backdrop of crippling sludge and twisted dissonance that truly separate *Psalms...* from the majority of similarly inclined exercises in speed and savagery. For those who fear that extreme music is becoming too clinical, this is the vomit-flecked antidote. [8]

DOM LAWSON



EARLY GRAVES

GONER

METAL BLADE

A raging, hell-wracked racket

A BREATH of endearingly fetid air when they ambushed the metal with their *We: The Guillotine* debut, Early Graves have edge and bruising sincerity in plentiful supply, even if the Entombed-like crunch they employ to embellish their brutish hellcore assaults smacked slightly of hedged bets. With much of that deathly sonic weight usurped by a bleak and vicious strain of blackened, minimalist punk rock, *Goner* is a different matter entirely. Ridiculously raw, violent and hostile, this is the sound of desperation at full pelt, leaving shards of nihilistic terror embedded in your skull. Even on the slower, more considered likes of *Wraiths*, EG give the impression that they can feel death snapping at their heels. A hideous thrill. [8]

DOM LAWSON



HELL MILITIA

LAST STATION ON THE ROAD TO DEATH

DEBUMIR MORTI

A gathering of Gallic hordes

A BLACK metal supergroup? Of sorts. Hell Militia's members make up no fewer than 17 other French extreme metal bands. *Last Station On The Road To Death* is their second full-length opus and finds them still drawing inspiration from Mayhem's landmark *De Mysteriis Dom Sathanas*, although with an unmistakable Gallic twist; the harsh, sandpaper vocals and dissonant black riffing aren't a million miles from Antaeus and Arkhon Infaustus, with whom they share their lineup. Hell Militia sound suitably nasty and unpleasant and have bile enough to satisfy although are not going to threaten the likes of *Secrets Of The Moon* or *Deathspell Omega* just yet. [7]

ALASTAIR RIDDELL



HORSEBACK

THE INVISIBLE MOUNTAIN

RELAPSE

A mesmerising trail of misery

COMPRISING four songs in 40 minutes, *The Invisible Mountain* is a lumbering mammoth. Horseback, aka Jenks Miller, eschews the dull meandering of many modern post-metal bands, instead concentrating on big mournful riffs and hypnotic krautrock rhythms. It brings to mind trotting wearily through a vast desert plain on, er... horseback. Mr Miller has clearly listened to Swans' *Soundtracks For The Blind* goliath, which treads similarly melancholy ground. However, rather than adopt the fatalistic croon of Michael Gira, he uses a BM-inspired rasp that helps articulate his anguish quite distinctly. A fine record to mull over the misery and worthlessness of existence. [8]

DANIEL CAIRNS



LIMBONIC ART

PHANTASMAGORIA

CANDELIGHT

Norwegians lose their keys

DURING the mid-to-late 90s Norway's Limbionic Art carved out a name for themselves in the black metal scene with a highly bombastic – even pompous – take on the genre, utilising heavy synth that ran an extra mile with Emperor's baton. 2007's *Legacy Of Evil* saw the band curbing their use of keyboards, and *Phantasmagoria* continues in a similar vein, featuring simple 'one-finger' synth lines, as opposed to the long instrumental passages of old. With the emphasis on the vocals and percussion, the result is an above average slice of black metal but one that fails to stand out significantly. The streamlining of the sound has removed some of the eccentric charm that made the band's name. [7]

DAVAL PATTERSON



LUX DIVINA

FROM THE TOMB TO NATURE'S BLOOD

MAGNA RECORDINGS

Lost in a black hole

ATTUNED to the Earth's spirit and snogging Mother Nature, these Spaniards are a mix of violent black metal and a grey sense of ascetic melody. At times the way every track veers from brutality to folk jars, because that means neither part of the repertoire gets a chance to mature. Still, vocalist Norax can growl in the best Scooby-Doo manner, yet also has the pipes for genuine singing, while Gangreal and Javi Bastard are inventive guitarists. No song drowns in a surge of confusion, although most come close. Equally, there isn't an outstanding moment, one to make you embrace this album and keep it close for regular airings. Four albums in, and Lux Divina seem lost in a cul-de-sac. [5]

MALCOLM DOME



MASAKARI

THE PROFIT FEEDS

SOUTHERN LORD

The crust keeps crumbling

SOUTHERN Lord may be incorporating grind, D-beat and old-school death metal into its roster, but at least they're absorbing some high-quality acts into the fold, like this Cleveland-based crew. Masakari have emerged from the grime of squats, sharing breathing space with the likes of grind/crustcore heroes Tragedy and Victims while tackling themes of state-sponsored fear, blind obedience, and highlighting an anti-religion message. But they do so with surprising amounts of melodic riffage that makes the message they peddle that much harder to ignore as it metaphorically breathes down your neck and sprays spittle in your face. You can pull the CD out of the player, but you won't want to. [8]

CONNIE GORDON



MASTER

THE HUMAN MACHINE

PULVERISED

Death metal originals return

THERE'S old school and then there is the Chicago-born Master. Alongside Possessed they were the very first death metal bands to form and traded bootleg tapes saw them shape the burgeoning genre. Ten studio albums and 25 years later, Mastermind Paul Speckmann clearly has an 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it' policy. *The Human Machine* is chock-full of glorious old-school riffing packing all the subtlety of a steamroller and the grace of a bare-knuckle brawler. If it's hyper-speed finesse and showing off you want, move along. However, should you want scuzzed up, dirty metal that is likely to give you gangrene and vocals sounding like the singer is drowning in his own blood then Master are what you need. [7]

ALASTAIR RIDDELL

Winterfylleth: fields of glory and peach blossom



WINTERFYLLETH

THE MERCIAN SPHERE

CANDLELIGHT

Epic salute to the Union Black

FINALLY, a British black metal band with sufficient charisma, gall and artistry to draw the spotlight back onto the scene where the genre was spawned in the first place. Winterfylleth turned many heads with their debut, *The Ghost Of Heritage*, but their second opus is superior on every level, pulsating with new confidence and self-belief. This is epic, widescreen stuff, redolent at times of both Primordial's clangorous might and

Moonsorrow's paganised bombast, but with a well-defined identity of its own. There is something subtly exhilarating about the way these Mancunian warriors switch from razor-slash blasts to sky-saluting melodrama via eerie ambient passages. Songs like *A Valley Of Thick Oaks* conjure up dark shadows on the British landscape, all shrouded in nostalgic fog but no less real or emotive as a result. Peaking with the vast ambition and sharp focus of *The Honour Of Good Men On The Path To Eternal Glory*, *The Mercian Sphere* is a windswept and bewitching masterpiece. [9]

DOM LAWSON

Dreadful News

Resurrected industrial/noise legends announce new album and tour details!

SWANS, the uncompromising New York-based noise crew, once known for being the heaviest band in the universe, and whose reputation amongst the underground rock scene is so unassailable it could make Neurosis sulk, have announced the details for their new album, to be released via frontman Michael Gira's own Young God Records on September 20 – 14 years after their epic double 'swansong' album, *Soundtracks For The Blind. My Father Will Guide Me Up A Rope To The Sky* features eight tracks that apparently advance the more pastoral yet still cataclysmic direction of the band's later albums. The current lineup also features former Swans alumni Norman Westberg

and Christoph Hahn – who also played on Gira's post-Swans band Angels Of Light – on guitars, and fellow AOL members Phil Puleo and Thor Harris (both percussion), alongside Chris Pravdica on bass and 'gadgets'.

Swans embark on an Ireland/UK tour from October 21-30, headlining Birmingham's Supersonic Festival on October 24. See www.younggodrecords.com for more details.



Swans: cheer up, they're back!

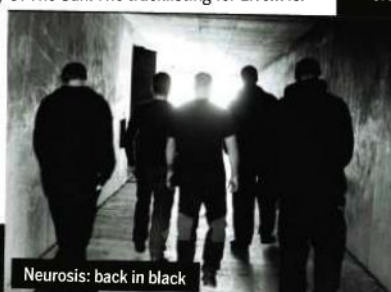
Grief In Brief

THE organisers of Damnation Festival have announced a bunch of extreme acts for this year's all-day bash, held at Leeds University Union on November 6. French post-black metallers **ALCEST**, British black/grind heroes **ANAAL NATHRAKH**, and frontman-sharing nutters **FUKPIG** will be joining the likes of the Dillinger Escape Plan, Earthtone9 and Rolo Tomassi, with some big names waiting to be confirmed. See www.damnationfestival.co.uk for details.

Sweden's oft-controversial, progressive extreme metal act **SHINING** are to headline their home country's first black metal festival, Forlorn Fest, alongside Ondskapt, Valkyrja, Thorium, Sorgeldom and more. Shining's seventh album, *VII: Född Förlorare*, is due for release later this year via Indie Recordings.

NEUROSIS are due to release a live album, cryptically titled *Live At Roadburn 2007* via Neurot Records, on August 30, alongside the reissue of 1993's *Enemy Of The Sun*. The tracklisting for *Live...* is:

Given To The Rising, Burn, A Season In The Sky, At The End Of The Road, Crawl Back In, Distill, Water Is Not Enough, Left To Wander and The Doorway.



Neurosis: back in black



Cephalic Carnage: don't miss 'em!

DON'T MISS...

ROLL up, roll up, for tokin' tech-metal loons **CEPHALIC CARNAGE** return to the UK in September, alongside frenzied riff-dissecters **PSYCRYPTIC**, **ION DISSONANCE**, **HOUR OF PENANCE** and **DYSCARNATE**. So don't forget to leave your brain at the door, the bar, the cloakroom and with The

Keepers Of The Fourth Portal Of The Hermetic Promontory at these junctures: London Underworld September 13, Plymouth White Rabbit 14, Manchester Moho Live 15, Colchester Arts Centre 16.



MONGO NINJA

NO CUNT FOR OLD MEN

INDIE

Pissed off and en route to Hell

THEIR name alone should be enough to make you snag a copy of this incendiary slice of ragged and lobotomised punk-metal, but Mongo Ninja have the snot and substance to back up the promise of their fantastic moniker. A gurning rabble of self-proclaimed 'Scandinavian shitheads', including Pete and Bård 'Faust' Eithun from Norwegian thrashers Blood Tsunami, they're ugly and antisocial with the raucous tunes to match. A scurrilous combination of Motörhead, Dwarves, Poison Idea and Slayer, songs like *Broken Cock and Pissing In The Wishing Well* offer an obnoxious antidote to the identikit sterility of much of today's metal scene. It's loud, stupid, drenched in cheap booze and wrapped in shit-stained leather. Perfect. [8]

DOM LAWSON



OCTOBER FALLS

A COLLAPSE OF FAITH

DEBUMUR MORTI

Earthy doom-folk from Finland

THESE consistently impressive Finns make their return two years after the release of the excellent *The Womb Of Primordial Nature*. As with that album, this opus is divided into lengthy chapters, each number being an epic and emotive journey that brings to mind such entities as Drudkh, Ulver and Opeth as well as more obscure acoustic-folk-for-metalheads acts such as Ainulindale. Doom/folk metal is probably the easiest label to apply, the defining quality of the band being its organic, earthy feel and natural flow, something that brings to mind Finnish black folk acts such as Wyrd, and sets the album apart from the more plastic, commercial takes on the genre. Epic, subtle and emotional, this comes recommended. [8]

DAYAL PATTERSON



STARKWEATHER

THIS SHELTERING NIGHT

DEATHWISH INC

Seminal metallers have a 'mare

YOU owe Starkweather a lot. Without them you probably wouldn't have all those lovely metallic hardcore bands like Cave In, The Red Chord or early Mastodon. *This Sheltering Night* is an odd one, though. It opens with a track that sounds like *Domination*-era Morbid Angel, but then segues into something that wouldn't sound out of place on a Sleepytime Gorilla Museum album. Mixing angular metal with creepy, ambient soundscapes, it's less a collection of songs, and more the soundtrack to a nightmare co-authored by Salvador Dali and Deathspell Omega. It takes a few listens to sink in, but those with attention spans and patience will get a lot out of it. All in all, a gleefully gruelling hour of music. [7]

DANIEL CAIRNS

The Best in Pieces

Imbibing the musty perfume of doom.



Black Sun Aeon: you won't catch anything like that, mate

B'eck and by thunder, what better way to kick off a quick survey of the current state

of the doom underground than with some homegrown talent? From the grand English tradition of occultism, supernatural horror and altered states that brought us both Esoteric and Electric Wizard, Dorset denizens **THE WOUNDED KINGS** are back with their second album of spacious, almost ambient gloom. *The Shadow Over Atlantis* (I Hate) [8] is a potent brew of strung-out strangeness. We'll stick with old Blighty for the moment for a squint at *Seven Bloodied Ramparts* (King Penda) [8], the third outing from Midlands duo **BRETWALDAS OF HEATHEN DOOM**. Imagine if Motörhead and Amebix decided to record a doom side-project. Arriving at the studio, they discover to their horror that there's only one bottle of cider. Panicked, they fight over it. This album's rough as a badger's arse but has bags of charm.

The second album by Finland's **BLACK SUN AEON** is a bit of a misery marathon. *Routa* (Cyclone Empire) [7] doubles the pain with two discs of winter-themed gothic doom and death metal reminiscent of Swallow The Sun and Moonsorrow. It's quality all the way although may be a

bit too much for a single sitting. Labelmates **THE FORESHADOWING** – also on their second album – take a more softly-softly approach akin to Katatonia and Anathema. *Oionos* (Cyclone Empire) [6] is the soundtrack to drapes fluttering in the breeze and still-drying ink on a suicide note. Have a big box of tissues handy. Portuguese trio **LÖBO** combine apocalyptic post-rock with spacey electronics to sometimes excellent effect, the keyword being 'sometimes'. An entirely instrumental affair, *Álma* (Major Label Industries) [6] may merely be an EP, but its glacial pace will make you feel like you've been to Pluto and back during its seemingly aeonian 35 minutes. Finally, down under in more ways than one for *Sorh* (Eisenwald) [6], the latest EP from Australia's **WOODS OF DESOLATION**. Although basically black

metal, the duo's repetitive, trance-like scraping is straight from the Burzum school of bleak atmospherics, making it just too miserable to be properly misanthropic. **GREG MOFFITT**



NECRONOMICON

THE RETURN OF THE WITCH

NAPALM

Unfussy servants of the black code

BLACK metal's artsy contingent have been raking in the plaudits lately, leaving the all-out metal approach of bands like Necronomicon to fall by the critical wayside. Admittedly, this Canadian trio do little that hasn't been pulled off with equal or greater aplomb by Dimmu Borgir and Vader, but there's plenty of ferocity driving these spiked-fist forays forward. Such is the simplicity of triumphant opener *Into The Fire* and the sickeningly catchy *The Time Is Now* that this is likely to appeal to as many Slayer fans as it will to underground aficionados, but the blasphemous, live-friendly urges that crackle and hiss at the core of this inferno are more than evident, scoring *The Return...* highly on the Satan-o-meter. [7]

DOM LAWSON



SÄWOL

THROUGH SOIL AND SKIN

BULLROSER

Death-doom hitting the doldrums

STARTING life as a solo project, this Finnish mob became a duo for their self-titled 2007 demo and have since fleshed out to a foursome for this, their full-length debut. Roaming the bleak nether regions favoured by so many of their fellow countrymen, they've assembled a reasonably interesting take on the doom/death genre, although they won't be getting gold stars at the foot of their copybooks just yet. It's the usual game of two halves: phases of excellence book-ended by swathes of trundling, plodding ordinariness. Their love of gentle instrumental overtures actually yields the best material. The weightier sections, whilst beefy enough, would benefit from a dose of doom's oft-overlooked catalyst: genuine emotion. [6]

GREG MOFFITT



THULCANDRA

FALLEN ANGEL'S DOMINION

NAPALM

Paying tribute to Swedish pioneers

A SIDE-project of pagan metallers Helfahrt (titter), Germany's Thulcandra enter Dissection tribute territory with this debut album. The similarities are more than apparent throughout the melodic death/black metal material: guitar tone, vocal style, the icy leads – even the noisy fret sounds on the acoustic parts and the blatantly Dissection-ish language, with talk of 'Black horizons', 'Blood-red skies' and 'Frozen kingdoms'. Hammering the point home, the album ends in a cover of *The Sombreland* and the album cover is even painted by Necrolord. All you need to know, therefore, is that these guys carry the whole thing off well, so if you feel in need of a 'lost' first incarnation Dissection album, you could do worse. [7]

DAYAL PATTERSON



REGAIN RECORDS



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The MASTERS of Swedish
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11/15



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Godflesh's Justin Broadrick:
eyes wide shut



Carcass's Jeff Walker:
eat my bass!

Hellfest 2010

CLISSON, FRANCE

DVER the last few years, Hellfest has been making a name for itself as arguably the best metal festival in Europe. With a bill that covers everything from classic to current, kvlt to mass appeal, you'd have to be miserable indeed to not find plenty of bands you love. They may be clashing with Motörhead but still there's a good turn-out of assorted mohawks and dreadlocks to see reunited crusties **DOOM** [9] bulldoze their way through a vicious swathe of D-beat classics. At least they do after a false start. In true DIY fashion, Bri Talbot breaks a guitar string on the very first note of the song. Still, 21 years on, *Bury The Debt, Not The Dead* is as vital as ever and still a point worth making. Neither an early start nor a missing guitarist seem to faze **SOLACE** [8] and the New Jersey boys' brand of stoner/doom is still heavier than concrete, with a groove wide enough to drive a pick-up truck down. Here is a band that always delivers – it's high time people woke up to them. For some

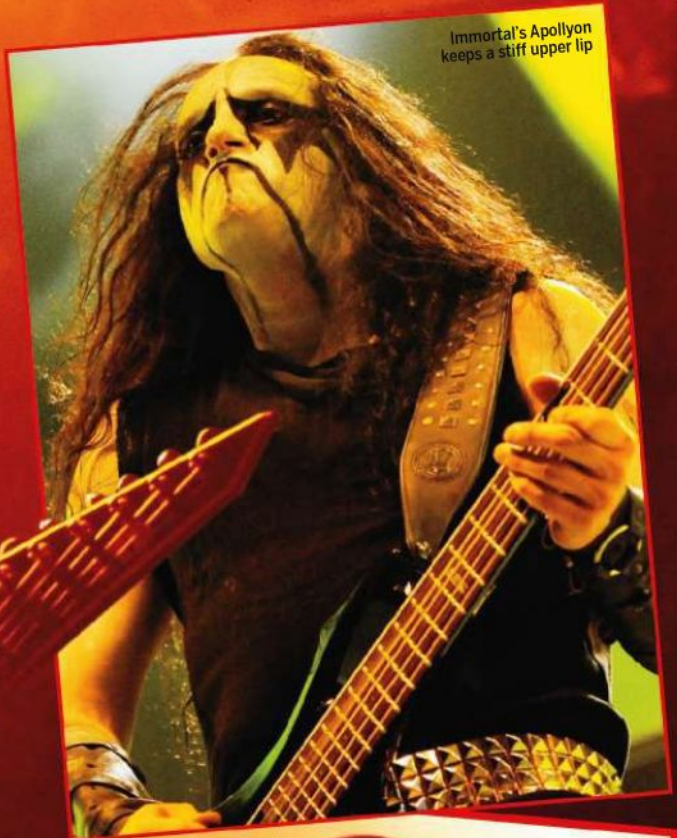
reason **SAVIOURS** [8] have been written off by many as hipster metal. Don't let that fool you – they deliver nothing but fired-up passionate metal; balls out, played from heart and featuring the sort of twin leads that'd make Steve Harris feel right at home. Backed by a wall of candles, with the smell of ritual incense all-pervading, **THE DEVIL'S BLOOD** [9] take to stage drenched in blood. Sounding all the world like Jefferson Airplane playing *Mercyful Fate* songs, they seem to be as much about occult ritual as music, and on a small stage it is completely mesmerising. No mere gimmick, it turns out they are equally fantastic in a tent. Ignoring the stage curfew, they jam out an extended chunk of the Aphrodite's Child classic *The Four Horsemen*. Blissful Satanic nirvana. Whoever thought **FIELDS OF THE NEPHILIM** [9] would be the right band to headline the Rockhard tent must

have been mad. Or rather, truly inspired. At the end of a day that has seen rain, sunburn and, by nightfall, biting cold, the rousing epic biker rock (not goth, apparently) and mystical vibe is the perfect antidote to leaden limbs. A spellbinding show. What should have been **GODFLESH**'s [7] triumphant return is something of an anticlimax. Sure, the music is still dense, claustrophobic and nastier than OAP porn, but a massive power failure means that the planned visuals are abandoned and sound gremlins affect the rest of the set. Not by any means a bad gig, particularly when the likes of *Christbait Rising* and *Like Rats* are let loose from their purgatory, it's just not quite the apocalypse we had expected. "Yeah, we got the riffs." Jeff Walker is a cocky old sod, but then **CARCASS** [9] really can back it up – you can't argue with *Corporal Jigsore Quandry*. If these are to be the last outings then it's a damn shame, as the band are every bit as good as they were the first time

around, if not better, and as far as death metal goes, who can really touch them? **IMMORTAL** [8] seem to be known as much for a thousand internet memes and animated gifs as for their music. Yes, laugh it up all you want but they know that black metal is all about the big show. And they deliver a very big show. Fake amps and pyro, make-up and crowd-pleasers; they take the 80s arena metal approach of *WASP* and *Iron Maiden* and add a few blastbeats. Abbath prowls the stage looking every bit like a young Gene Simmons, proudly displaying his infamous crab walk, amongst the supercharged *All Shall Fall* and the chest-prising, scything riffs of *Sons Of Northern Darkness*, and they're nowhere near as po-faced as most would believe: "You may have seen the video. This one is *Grim And Frostbitten Kingdoms*." Nice. **ALASTAIR RIDDELL**

SUBTERRANEA PITCHES UP AT ICELAND'S EISTNAFLUG FEST

Immortal's Apollyon
keeps a stiff upper lip



Immortal's Abbath:
keeper of the flame



Fields Of The Nephilim's
Carl McCoy kicks up a storm



Subterranea LIVES



EyeHateGod's Jimmy Bower snaps a string



Repulsion's guest, Cretin's Marissa: a new front for extreme metal

Impaled: sex doll face

Maryland Deathfest

SONAR, BALTIMORE

METALHEADS are a pretty peaceful bunch, leaving the local security shocked and bored with how little they're working. The peaceful serenity of the attendees is inversely proportional to the rage on the three stages. Watching the Dave Witte-backed, old-school death metal supergroup, **BIRDS OF PREY** [8], is a pleasure as they hand many young bucks their asses on platters. **TOMBS** [7] befuddle everyone with a set of all-new material and some uncharacteristically tentative drumming. **WATAIN** [8] burn the candle at both ends by presenting themselves simultaneously as evil in extremis and consummate showmen with fans blowing their locks 80s video-style, showy leads and a brief digression into Metallica's *The Call Of*

Ktulu. The sort-of reunited **GORGUTS** [7] start with some instrumental self-indulgence, but our resilience is rewarded with material from as far back as 1991's *Considered Dead*. Day two starts with an impressive set by Norse death metal ingénues **OBLITERATION** [8] and their carefully executed, 90s-influenced DM. **IMPALED** [9] welcome everyone to their own Baltimore-based Grand Guignol where gore lyrics are tattooed on foreheads and frowns are turned upside-down as you wonder why a band this entertaining aren't fucking massive. The antics are upped by Australia's **BLOOD DUSTER** [9] when bassist Jason PC greets the crowd with "Hello faggots!" and their grindcore-weighted set is greeted by an armada of blow-up toys. More seriously, but

equally is awesome, is the blast furnace intensity of **WOLFBRIGADE**'s [9] crossing of violent anti-globalisation protests, football hooliganism, a prickly Discharge and a smiling Motörhead. It's always awesome to have **REPULSION** [9] dig into *Horried* for a friendly reminder of how death/grind sounded in the mid-80s. Their set is made all the more exciting when they're joined onstage by Cretin's gorgeous Marissa (formerly Dan) Martinez. The Curator, vocalist for Australia's **PORTAL** [7], sports a hooded papal mask/hat, though their mystique is nearly eclipsed by hundreds of glowing camera screens held aloft as the band whirl through their twisted Morbid Angel-meets-Dali-painting death metal. Sunday is the main attraction for many, but hope

goes down the shitter when **ENTOMBED** [5]'s LG Petrov's first words are, "I'm fucking drunk," as it becomes obvious that, despite faithful renditions, the Swe-death legends are a mere shadow of their unhinged and unrestrained past. Where Entombed bring mediocrity, Seattle's **BLACK BREATH** [9] bristle with energy; the sound is classic death'n'roll with buzzsaw guitars moulded by a punk edge and a pissing-razors singer. Kudos to **EYEHATEGOD** [8]'s Mike Williams for not devolving their set into a stumbling, drug-addled trainwreck. Classics *Sister Fucker* and *Dixie Whiskey* are churned out and sound rehearsed, but not so much that the swampy, Southern swagger doesn't set Deathfest alight.

CONNIE GORDON



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Orphaned Land:
"Yes, I look like Jesus,
ha bloody ha"

Orphaned Land

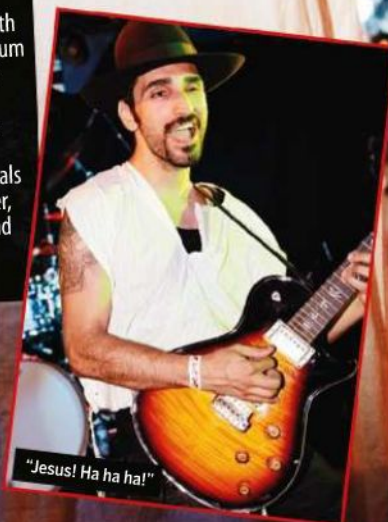
Jurojin

THE UNDERWORLD, LONDON

BASED in London and formed just over two years ago, **JUROJIN** [7] are already causing something of a stir. They've earned a slew of strong reviews, appeared live with American metallers Sevendust and, more interestingly, at distinguished arts/culture venue the Barbican Centre. It's not hard to see why the band would garner such a wide appeal, their sound marrying elements of prog, metal and jazz, to name but a few. Nonetheless, while the individual musicians are undoubtedly very talented, they initially appear to be heading in somewhat different directions on stage, though the appearance of the band's tabla player and a second guitarist adds a great deal of focus to the experience, as well as an exotic Middle Eastern atmosphere. A Middle Eastern atmosphere is of course something closely associated with Israeli headliners **ORPHANED LAND** [8], and the appearance of at least one audience member in a hijab appears to lend credence to their aim of bringing together individuals of different – often conflicting – religions, their show referencing Islam, Christianity and Judaism in its aesthetics. "I'm not

actually Jesus Christ of Nazareth, I'm Kobi Farhi of Tel Aviv," clarifies the band's white-robed frontman, although this London appearance – their first in a two-decade-long career – is greeted with all the passion of a second coming by the audience, who are rewarded with a lengthy set that features more than one encore and spans the band's discography. The epic and progressive metal of the group proves to be both engaging and lively in a live environment, the crowd bouncing with the group to numbers from latest album *The Never Ending Way Of Orwarrior* and classics like *Ocean Land* (*The Revelation*). The use of backing track leaves an odd taste in the mouth, however, particularly the female vocals that appear ghost-like from the ether, but otherwise this is a convincing and uplifting display.

DAYAL PATTERSON



"Jesus! Ha ha ha!"

Isis

Melvins

PARADISE ROCK CLUB, BOSTON

"IT'S kind of a 'fuck you' to your fans to break up," teases Buzz Osborne, dedicating *Anaconda* when his **MELVINS** [8] open for **ISIS** [7] at the latter's last show in the city where they formed in 1997, just two days before their final show altogether in Montreal. Maybe Melvins had some influence on Isis long ago, but onstage there's a striking contrast between bands. Buzz and company detonate an adrenaline bomb of furious riffs, coupled with their trademark absurdity, unlike the more calculated brick-upon-brick musical progression of the headliner. Isis certainly are less assuming, taking the stage without fanfare to cheers and scattered applause, until *From Sinking* builds in tension and explodes with Aaron Turner's wounded roar. Their trademark musical ambience – mostly guitarist Michael Gallagher and bassist Jeff Caxide – seems even more hypnotic live, and that dynamic creates a diversion that makes the heavier elements of the band punch much harder than the albums. The Boston fans stand in almost rapt attention, nodding and swaying from foot to foot in absorbed contemplation. The eight-song set touches all five full-lengths, and the intent faces reflect the sonic rollercoaster range of emotions generated by the songs. Lonely desolation seems the most common feeling, especially throughout the encore of *The Beginning And The End*, likely heightened by the knowledge that, for Isis, this is it.

ROGER LOTRING

Obiat

Zippo

THE GAFF, LONDON

THE Gaff is probably the only venue we know where you can play a few rounds of *Street Fighter* with a band prior to their set, and it's apt that Italy's **ZIPPO** [8] come out fighting onstage tonight, setting about the task of winning over the assembled crowd with their varied, psychedelic and expansive take on a (more or less) stoner rock template. The band prove an engaging act, exhibiting the sort of stage command that only comes with heavy touring. Accompanied by a lava lamp acid trip of a light show, the UK-based (but internationally comprised) four-piece **OBIAT** [9] have rarely been on better form. Echoing the more punchy nature of their recent third album, *Eye Tree Pi*, the band are notably more immediate than you'd expect from a group with so many psychedelic overtones, not least because of the crushing sound tonight. If notes and beats can be laced with LSD, then Obiat have apparently prepared an extra-strong dose.

DAYAL PATTERSON

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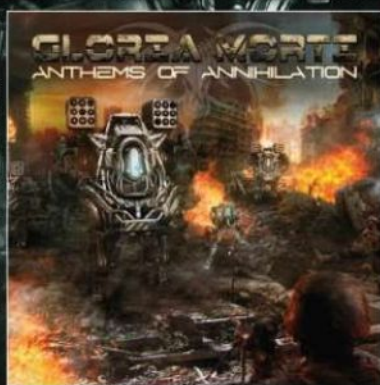
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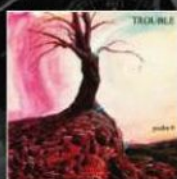


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The last Thirteen Questions

Oystein & Brun Borknagar

The guitarist/songwriter for Norway's prog/psych metal collective opens up about ancient underground artists, words of war and why 250,000 albums is next to nothing.

When you started did you ever think the band was going to last as long as it has?

"No. When I started to work on musical ideas back in 1994 I had no goal or ideas about making a career out of this. I simply wanted to make some great music. But I am really proud of what we have actually achieved and the magnitude of what we have created still amazes me every single day."

Do you believe in god(s) or the devil?

"Religions and mythologies are indeed interesting subjects that I have spent a lot of time studying and been inspired by. But I find no evidence or reason to lock my mind in one certain direction – and certainly not when it comes to all of the domesticated and organised religions that we see all over the place today."

What has been the high point of your career?

"One of my high points was back in 1996 when I signed a record deal with Century Media Records on behalf of Borknagar. I realised that we were about to enter new realms of possibility."

And the lowest point?

"Back in the late 90s, we were opening for Cradle Of Filth. The first gig we did on that tour was so horrible in every aspect that we just had to go off the stage in the middle of our set!"

Is there a piece of art and/or film that's important to you?

"Since I was a kid I've been a hardcore *Star Wars* fan. Nowadays I have partly fallen off the fan wagon but those movies have certainly influenced me a lot throughout the years."

But I'm old-school and prefer the first three movies by far."

Have you made any enemies along the way?

"'Enemy' is a strong word and really only belongs in times of war. Still, I am pretty sure we have stepped on a couple of toes throughout the years but that is just the way of life and certainly when it comes to the music business. But I don't have any enemies and hopefully nobody would regard us – me or the band – as enemies either. If they do, please come forth."

Are you a difficult person to work with?

"If you ask Century Media they'll probably immediately shout 'Yes!' If you ask Indie Recordings, they will probably say 'No'. I am very protective towards Borknagar. Musically, we've never compromised for commercial interests and that has probably caused some headaches amongst some associates along the way. When it comes to my bandmates, I have always tried to stimulate the guys to realise their full potential and to maintain a creative environment within the band."

Is there a song you are most proud of writing?

"Hard to pick a favourite child, but *Universal* from *The Archaic Course* is the song the first comes to mind. To me that is an ultimate 'feel-good/evil' song... ha ha!"

What are your ambitions now?

"Right now our ambitions are to bring our live activities up a notch. Our previous vocalist/bass player ICS Vortex [ex-Dimmu Borgir] is stepping in as [vocalist] Vintersorg has private obligations going on. Also, I am halfway done writing the next album, so lots of things are happening."

What albums would you take to a desert island with you?

Ulver's *Shadow Of The Sun*, Porcupine Tree's *Fear Of A Blank Planet* and Katatonia's *Night Is The New Day* really stick out from the last couple of years."

What point in history would you most like to visit, and why?

"It would be nice to hang around the 'dungeons' of Da Vinci or go and see and hang out with Mozart and drink some wine!"

What's the hardest part of the lifestyle you have chosen?

"Being an artist and trying to be a businessman is a really hard nut to crack. It's like love and hate. We don't have a manager as we want to stay autonomous. We may have sold about 250,000 albums over the years, but there's no money heading our way. The hardest part of this lifestyle we have all chosen

"I'M VERY INFLUENCED BY STAR WARS. I'VE BEEN A hardcore FAN SINCE I WAS A KID"

is that making a decent living from this seems close to impossible."

What's the most important lesson you've learned along the way?

"It's all about integrity, dedication, focus and bloody hard work!"

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